

1990

# Role Duality as Represented in the Antiabolitionist Speeches of James Shannon.

Barry Cole Poyner

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**Role duality as represented in the anti-abolitionist speeches of  
James Shannon**

**Poyner, Barry Cole, Ph.D.**

**The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col., 1990**

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**Role Duality as Represented  
in the  
Anti-Abolitionist Speeches of James Shannon**

**A Dissertation**

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**In**

**The Department of Speech Communication,  
Theatre,  
and Communication Disorders**

**by**

**Barry Cole Poyner  
B.A., David Lipscomb College, 1984  
M. A., Louisiana State University, 1986  
May 1990**

## **Acknowledgements**

The writer wishes to thank the libraries and staff of Hargrett Library, University of Athens, Georgia; Transylvania University Archives, Lexington, Kentucky; University of Missouri Archives, Lewis Hall, Columbia; Missouri Historical Society; Culver-Stockton College, Canton, Missouri; and Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, Tennessee. The writer especially wishes to express appreciation to his dissertation reviewing committee: Drs. Andrew King, John Lowe, Harold Mixon, John Whittaker, and Ken Zagacki, but owes a special debt of gratitude to Dr. Owen Peterson, whose patience and helpful suggestions contributed to a better dissertation.

In the arena of moral and financial support, the writer is especially grateful to the Killen Church of Christ, Killen, Alabama; Northside Church of Christ, Mayfield, Kentucky; Seventh and College Streets Church of Christ, Mayfield, Kentucky; Goodwood Boulevard Church of Christ, Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and Jackson Church of Christ, Jackson, Louisiana. Invaluable thanks are owed Charlotte Marshall of Athens, Georgia, for her foresight in preserving Shannon materials and for her perceptive insight on history. Finally, a word of thanks must be expressed to my wife, Cathy, who has encouraged me at every juncture, comforted me in times of disappointment, and tolerated me in worse moments.

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## **Abstract**

The dissertation alleges that a speaker may juggle roles in a given rhetorical situation, what may be termed role duality. Role duality refers to a speaker's attempt to effect multiple intentions while fulfilling or partially fulfilling multiple role expectations. A purpose of this dissertation was to speculate further on the nature and function of role duality by analyzing the speeches of James Shannon. Correspondingly, another purpose was to evaluate through rhetorical criticism the pro-slavery, anti-abolitionist speeches of Shannon.

Shannon (1799-1859), an evangelist in the Churches of Christ and an influential educator, delivered two principal speeches in defense of slavery: 1) "The Philosophy of Slavery as Identified with the Philosophy of Human Happiness" given to the Franklin Society of Bacon College, Harrodsburg, Kentucky, on 27 June 1844 and 2) "An Address Delivered before the Pro-slavery Convention of the State of Missouri, Held in Lexington, July 13, 1855."

The dissertation sought to determine 1) whether sufficient evidence existed to ascertain Shannon's intentions in delivering the addresses, 2) whether Shannon's rhetorical choices could be said to constitute role duality, and 3) whether the means Shannon employed furthered his goals. A preponderance of evidence pointed to the conclusion that Shannon harbored multiple intentions, and that while addressing an immediate audience, he also had in mind reaching wealthy southerners who might help Bacon College in Harrodsburg, Kentucky, or Christian University in Canton, Missouri. Less clear was whether a discernible strategy accompanied that effort. Organization seemed to play an insignificant part in reaching contributors, undecided border state auditors, and potential employers. Based on the two speeches, roughly half of Shannon's arguments were reasonably sound, seemingly indicating that Shannon was more concerned with identifying with southerners emotionally than logically convincing all listeners. As represented in the anti-abolitionist speaking of James Shannon, role duality may be seen as a strategy best reserved for desperate moments, for persons with high credibility, and for ceremonial occasions.

## Introduction

### CHAPTER 1

The idea that a public speaker should be aware of demographic variables within an audience so that communication strategies can be adapted to promote acceptance of ideas and identification with the audience is a long standing rhetorical prescription. Neither is one venturing on new theoretical territory by observing that some rhetorical situations are highly defined, e.g. the preacher and congregation, and consequently compel rhetors to assume communication roles in which conventions are respected and appropriate behaviors expected. At other times, however, the communication role may not be so defined; Vause and Wiemann, for instance, consider the invention of a communication role in the absence of models to guide appropriate behavioral choices. They observe that:

the communication problem that confronts the interactant is the rhetorical task of putting together the elements of a social role which will be effective in a situation where expectations for performance have not been defined.<sup>1</sup>

Whether the communication role is highly defined or not, Hart and Burks argue that "man is by nature a role-taker" whose chief existential act is deciding between and among roles.<sup>2</sup> Hart and Burks label this attitude of role flexibility as "rhetorical sensitivity." According to the authors, rhetorical sensitives 1) accept personal complexity--a complex network of selves, 2) avoid rigid role confinement, 3) empathize with interactants, 4) recognize communication appropriateness--times to speak and remain silent-- and 5) are tolerant toward the

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<sup>1</sup> Corrinne J. Vause and John M. Wiemann, "Communication Strategies for Role Invention," The Western Journal of Speech Communication 45 (1981): 241.

<sup>2</sup> Roderick P. Hart and Don M. Burks, "Rhetorical Sensitivity and Social Interaction," Speech Monographs 39 (1972): 77.



communication strategies of others.<sup>3</sup> It has generally been assumed that rhetorically sensitive spokespersons approach each situation and then choose communication strategies that meet the requirements for that particular role. But how is role affected when a rhetor intentionally addresses a wider audience? Or conversely, particularly if the rhetor is in the international or national light, how may role be misinterpreted when a rhetor's remarks to a *specific* audience are made known to *other* unintended audiences? Third, how may deliberate role violation aid a rhetor? These scenario questions deserve consideration.

The first scenario suggests that just as rhetors harbor multiple intentions they simultaneously assume multiple communication roles, whether the attempt is successful or not. The second scenario underscores that audiences, too, are role players in the communication act with identification dependent on individual willingness to accept the role; other audiences may not be so willing.<sup>4</sup> Lastly, the third scenario illustrates the rhetorical power attached to role conformity: violation of the norm may result in volatile reaction. Only in this case, intentional role violation heralds a minority cause that might otherwise go unnoticed and possibly serves as a rallying call.

More to the point of this dissertation, what I am alleging is that a speaker may "juggle" roles in a given rhetorical situation, what may be termed **role duality**. Role duality refers to a speaker's attempt to effect multiple intentions while fulfilling or partially fulfilling multiple role expectations. A purpose of this dissertation is to speculate further on the nature and function of

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<sup>3</sup> Roderick P. Hart, Robert E. Carlson, and William F. Eadie, "Attitudes Toward Communication and the Assessment of Rhetorical Sensitivity," Communication Monographs 47 (1980): 2.

<sup>4</sup> Walter J. Ong, "The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction," Publications of the Modern Language Association of America 90 (1975): 12. While exploring the creation of audience in fiction, Ong's thoughtful essay has implications for rhetorical studies, too. Ong suggests that writers construct audiences "cast in some sort of role--entertainment seekers, reflective sharers of experience" etc. Ong further suggests that an audience must "correspondingly fictionalize itself. A reader has to play the role in which the author has cast him."

role duality by analyzing the speeches of James Shannon. Correspondingly, another purpose is to evaluate through rhetorical criticism the pro-slavery/ anti-abolitionist speeches of Shannon.

Shannon (1799-1859), an evangelist in the Churches of Christ and an influential educator, delivered two principal speeches in defense of slavery: 1) "The Philosophy of Slavery as Identified with the Philosophy of Human Happiness," given to the Franklin Society of Bacon College, Harrodsburg, Kentucky, on 27 June 1844 and 2) "An Address Delivered before the Pro-slavery Convention of the State of Missouri, Held in Lexington, July 13, 1855." Both speeches were printed and found expression during times when the issue of slavery was being debated but occurred also when Shannon contemplated career changes and/or depended on southern charity to support private institutions he headed.

It is my contention that Shannon was aware of these exigences, precipitating causes that gave rise to each speech, and devised a speech to meet multiple audience expectations. My preliminary hypothesis is that the two addresses were meant more for southern, aristocratic readers (role # 1, college president / fund-raiser) than they were for border-state auditors interested in the slavery debate (role #2, debater). Since Shannon contemplated career changes at the times when both speeches were delivered a third role as family provider also emerges: fund-raising and job security going hand in hand.

Through analysis of the speeches and pertinent data, the dissertation seeks to determine 1) whether sufficient evidence exists to ascertain Shannon's intention in delivering the addresses, 2) whether Shannon's rhetorical choices could be said to constitute role duality, and 3) whether the means Shannon employed to further his goals were effective. Determination of the foregoing is a necessary prerequisite before any proto-theory of how role duality is achieved can be delineated. Indeed, it could well be the case, that Shannon may prove a poor practitioner of role duality.

### Scenario One: Role Duality and Wider Audience

My interest in role duality first peaked while studying the so-called "woe sayings" of the Hebrew prophets.<sup>5</sup> While directed against foreign powers, these sayings were given in the company of sympathetic Jewish audiences: the supposed intention of the prophet being to bolster support for the Jewish king during times of domestic and/or international crisis(es). By "cursing" or pronouncing doom on the enemy, the prophet extended hope to the home front, to the *wider audience*: woe speeches became salvation prophecies. James Shannon, similarly, employed this strategy in his anti-abolitionist speaking.

To provide an example, in a paper entitled "Toward an Understanding of Hebrew Prophecy: Isaiah, Inspired Prophet, Religious Persuader, or Political Propagandist?"<sup>6</sup> I argued that Isaiah was a bit of all three: a recognized religious leader (role #1, prophet) functioning as King Ahaz's spokesperson (role #2, propagandist) in a theocracy (role #3, religious persuader). Based on an analysis of Isaiah 10:5-34, I concluded that the speech, drawing upon a woe oracle motif, represented the 8th century B. C. prophet's attempt to appease domestic factions during the Syro-Ephraimite crisis.

Spearheaded by King Rezin of Syria, a coalition of vassal Palestinian states conspired against the Assyrian empire, ruled by Tiglath-pileser III. The refusal of Menahem in Israel, whose reign had been legitimized by Assyrian help, and of Ahaz in Judah to participate in the coalition weakened Rezin's position. During a power transfer, Pekah, perhaps aided by Rezin,

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<sup>5</sup> See Claus Westermann, Basic Forms of Prophetic Speech, trans. Hugh Clayton White (Philadelphia: Westminster P., 1967) 190; Waldemar Janzen, Mourning Cry and Woe Oracle (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1972); John H. Hayes, "The Usage of Oracles Against Foreign Nations in Ancient Israel," Journal of Biblical Literature 87 (1968): 86; Duane L. Christensen, Transformation of the War Oracles in Old Testament Prophecy: Studies in the Oracles Against the Nations (Bridgewater, MA: Scholars P., 1975).

<sup>6</sup> Barry Cole Poyner, "Towards an Understanding of Hebrew Prophecy: Isaiah, Inspired Prophet, Religious Persuader, or Political Propagandist?" Southern States Communication Association Convention paper, Memphis, 10 April 1988.

overthrew Menahem's heir and sought to pressure, if need be remove, Ahaz in order to solidify opposition in the region.<sup>7</sup>

The analysis revealed the following rhetorical strategies. First, Isaiah pictured Assyria as an instrument of God, thereby justifying by divine authority Ahaz's resolve not to join the anti-Assyrian coalition. Second, Isaiah exaggerated and extended Assyrian ambition by imagining and predicting a thwarted military campaign against Judah: Instruments of God may be presumptuous. Third, Isaiah employed fear and anger arousing appeals in order to heighten Ahaz's role as a national hero. Fourth, Isaiah evoked powerful traditions of the past in order to heighten the historical significance of Ahaz's victory and subsequent future role in Palestine.

My research underscored the fact that religious prophets, like modern preachers, had a propensity to fuse politics and religion. An astute political counselor and religious persuader, Isaiah ably defended Ahaz's policies during a time of international and domestic crisis. Although Isaiah helped win favor for Ahaz's foreign policy, other Hebrew prophets at times publicly expressed displeasure with kingly decisions: in fact, the Hebrew scriptures record a number of accounts in which prophets called for political overthrow.

A chief rhetorical tactic used by the Hebrew prophets to achieve role duality was invective. Although this ancient rhetorical tactic is seldom called "cursing" or its form labeled as "woe speech" today, invective is abundantly apparent in modern society taking various nuances. Whether one calls it scape-goating, mud-slinging, vituperative speaking, argument ad hominem, or pejorative-hurling, invective (which I opt to use) continues because it serves key strategic functions: namely, to rally support from one's allies/constituency and also to provide a vital indirect channel through which political ideas can be tested. Indeed, invective, for all its expressive (cathartic) nature, may fulfill an instrumental (goal-oriented) place in the achievement of role duality.

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<sup>7</sup> I accept the rhetorical situation as occurring during this time period and derive support for such a setting from J. Maxwell Miller and John H. Hayes, A History of Ancient Israel and Judah (Philadelphia: Westminster P, 1986) 344. These authors assign 10:27b-32 to the time frame.

### Scenario Two: Role Duality and Immediate Audience

To refer to an earlier question, "how may role be misinterpreted when a rhetor's remarks to a *specific* audience are made known to *other* unintended audiences?" Role duality is a precarious art: those who practice this art must walk a fine line between role duality and duplicity. Those who criticize the art must have a thorough understanding of the exigence(s) that gave rise to the speech. Indeed, the tension between instrumental and expressive rhetoric may be viewed as a struggle between two realms: the epideictic and the judicial and/or deliberative. Even so, to view the two worlds as mutually-exclusive is to err, for both levels can be present simultaneously, e.g. negotiating.

To provide contemporary example, one might consider the "Evil Empire" speech given by former President Ronald Reagan.<sup>8</sup> Did Reagan really regard the Soviet Union as an "evil empire," or was he adapting remarks to conservative evangelicals while at the same time (role duality) portraying a tough negotiating line for the Soviets? I tend to accept the latter view. The speech may be labeled an epideictic address. It does not attempt to specify policy options, as one might expect in a deliberative speech, but was designed for a specific occasion: an excellent opportunity for President (role #1, symbolic leader of the free world) Reagan, a consummate after-dinner speaker (role #2) to posture for a more challenging role (role #3) as negotiator. Delivered at the annual convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida, on 8 March 1983, the speech is replete with jokes, anecdotes, illustrations, and biblical allusions: what G. Thomas Goodnight called "one of the most curious addresses in modern American history,"<sup>9</sup> but what I am inclined to view as deliberate attempts to meet multi-role expectations.

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<sup>8</sup> Ronald Reagan, "National Association of Evangelicals," Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, 14 March 1983, 364-370.

<sup>9</sup> G. Thomas Goodnight, "Ronald Reagan's Re-formulation of the Rhetoric of War: Analysis of the 'Zero Option,' 'Evil Empire,' and 'Star Wars' Addresses," Quarterly Journal of Speech 72 (1986): 400.

In this instance, Reagan's remarks received overwhelming approval from his immediate audience. Other audiences, upon hearing such references as "that totalitarian darkness" and "the aggressive impulses of an evil empire" regarded the remarks as questionable and, at most, offensive and counter-productive to arms negotiations. Were all of Reagan's speeches concerning the Soviet Union cast in this same struggle between the forces of good and evil, one would have good reason to label him as a representative of the "paranoid style."<sup>10</sup> But Reagan had earlier won wide bi-partisan praise through his "Zero Option" speech as a "responsible custodian of frightening power, not some missile-riding cowboy."<sup>11</sup>

G. Thomas Goodnight faulted the "Zero Option" speech as making a promise to enjoin in dialogue with the USSR, a promise that was not kept, as can be seen in Reagan's use of diatribes in the "Evil Empire" address. Goodnight eventually posited that the first term of the Reagan administration adopted an obsolete pre-World War II outlook despite the realities of a nuclear age. I take issue with Goodnight and believe that one can acknowledge that significant negotiations resulted, perhaps through the projection of a hard line, and that the administration's position and outlook were, in retrospect, not as rigidly held as they were worded. Interpreted this way, Reagan's invective emerges as a strategic tool to achieve role duality.

Admittedly, speeches--even epideictic speeches--may have wider audiences, and Reagan did totter dangerously close to crossing the line from epideictic (praise/blame) to judicial (accusation) rhetoric. But then again, one must remember, critics particularly, the immediate audience and the political reality of pleasing one's constituency. In this light, the speech may be interpreted as an effort to bolster support for the President at home, and was never intended to

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<sup>10</sup> Richard Hofstadter, The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965). Hofstadter defines the "paranoid" rhetor as given to exaggeration, suspiciousness, and conspiratorial fantasy. History is viewed as a conspiracy in which evil powers have great sway. The paranoid spokesperson sees this fact in apocalyptic terms, launches a crusade, and warns of impending doom that may be averted--a style not unlike the Hebrew prophets.

<sup>11</sup> "A Sober Custodian, Not a Cowboy," New York Times, 19 Nov. 1981, A 30.

outline foreign policy. Like the woe sayings of ancient Hebrew prophets, Reagan's "woe to the enemy" became the flipside to "hail to the chief!" Admittedly directed at the Soviet Union, the remarks were more designed for the hearing of Reagan's immediate audience. Unlike prophetic times, practitioners of role duality must consider that nothing escapes attention in today's global village.

### **Scenario Three: Role Duality and Norm Violation**

The deliberate violation of expected communication roles may likewise shed light on the concept of role duality. It would be generally regarded as rhetorically sensitive to observe, at least tacitly regard, the conventional behavior suggested by a given role. Indeed, a certain unwritten communication etiquette intimates that one can disagree (role #1, opponent) without being disagreeable (role #2, e.g. social guest). Violations of role decorum may result in violent reaction.

For illustrative purposes one might refer to Keir Hardie, whom Owen Peterson described as "the absolutely independent M. P."<sup>12</sup> Hardie, a popular Labor Party leader in England, found little popularity in the House of Commons; instead, Hardie seized every opportunity to agitate (role #1, agitator) class distinction by raising socially awkward questions. One such opportunity occurred on 28 June 1894 when Hardie refused to join in sending congratulatory remarks (role #2, social role) to the royal family upon the birth of a son. Upon learning of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's intention to introduce a congratulatory resolution, Hardie asked that an expression of sympathy also be included for the families of 251 miners killed in Wales on the same day as the birth. Hardie's request was rejected as inappropriate for the occasion. In response, when the resolution was introduced, Hardie dissented (role #3, Labor uniter) with a speech belittling

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<sup>12</sup> Owen Peterson, "Keir Hardie: The Absolutely Independent M.P." Quarterly Journal of Speech 60 (1969):142.

hereditary rule. Alienating both Parliament and press, Hardie's remarks, nevertheless, met with overwhelming support from the working class.

Why did Hardie intentionally violate the social role and engage role duality? Peterson explained that the answer lay with Hardie's concept of his own role as an uncompromising agitator in the Labor Party's struggle for political legitimacy: "the circumstances in which the speech was given suggest that this [hostile reaction from press and Parliament] may have been precisely the reaction Hardie sought."<sup>13</sup> Hence, Hardie's real audience, it seems, was the working class whom he hoped to solidify in the labor movement.

### Significance and Justification of Dissertation

The present study merits consideration for two predominant reasons. First, James Shannon remains an obscure figure in the history of Churches of Christ, since his achievements were overshadowed by his adamant pro-slavery views. Personal interest in Shannon developed during a seminar on southern oratory in which graduate students were asked to investigate the positions of churches toward slavery in the ante-bellum period. In Churches of Christ, Shannon stood virtually alone in his defense of slavery, yet members owned approximately 100,000 slaves--by ratio more than any other religious group in the South.<sup>14</sup> Promoting unity among believers, leaders (largely editors) in the church rarely spoke on the subject; when compelled to speak, they stressed that slavery was a political evil not a religious one. During a time when the Presbyterian and Baptist denominations divided over slavery, Churches of Christ avoided an immediate division by refusing to address the issue. If distasteful to "restorationist" thought then and to romanticized histories of the past now, Shannon more than any other leader among Churches of Christ articulated what the brethren silently practiced. The study, then, merits consideration

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<sup>13</sup> Peterson 149.

<sup>14</sup> John G. Fee, "Non-fellowship with Slaveholders: The Duty of Christians" (New York: John A. Gray, Printer, 1851).



because of its historical nature: Shannon was practically the only representative of his religious order to speak for slavery.

A second purpose concerns role duality. I hope this study of role duality in Shannon's speeches will serve as a vehicle to arrive at a proto-theory of how it may be effectively achieved. As a college president (role #1), debater (role #2), and family provider (role #3), Shannon delivered two anti-abolitionist speeches when his role as college president was threatened. By **anti-abolitionist**, I follow the usage of contemporary historians in describing pro-slavery speakers after 1831, the rise of radical, Garrisonian abolitionism.<sup>15</sup> To prove or disprove that Shannon attempted role duality in order to preserve and/or gain employment as a college president is a significant question that may further clarify and define role duality as a communication strategy.

The dissertation is limited to the study of James Shannon's anti-abolitionist speaking. Although scattered, sufficient primary materials exist to conduct such a study and are located at four institutions: 1) University of Missouri at Columbia, 2) Culver-Stockton College, Canton, Missouri, 3) University of Georgia at Athens, and 4) Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Nashville, Tennessee. Shannon's views on slavery are stated principally in the two speeches mentioned previously. Fortunately both manuscript and printed copies of these addresses are available.

### Methodology

From a historical-critical perspective, I intend to construct a biography of Shannon and to analyze the two selected speeches. Guidelines for rhetorical criticism outlined by Robert S. Cathcart and Thonssen, Baird, and Braden will be consulted to determine the validity of individual arguments. The interest in biography is not casual, but significant in determining influences that

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<sup>15</sup> Larry E. Tise, A History of the Defense of Slavery in America, 1701-1840 (Athens: U Georgia P, 1987) xvi.

may have borne on Shannon's choice of arguments and in understanding the communicative roles that Shannon occupied at the times of the speeches. In *analysis* one "inquires into the speaker's choices and execution of them in order to grasp how the speaker perceived the situation and why certain devices were employed."<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, in chapter two of the dissertation I seek to trace the emergence of Shannon as a speaker, and in chapter three, reconstruct the rhetorical situations surrounding the selected speeches.

In chapter four the study seeks to determine whether *organization* (arrangement of ideas) and *invention* (choice of logical appeals) aided the functioning of role duality. Similarly, chapter five seeks to determine in what ways *invention* (choice of ethical and emotional appeals) and *style* (choice of wording) appealed to Shannon's listeners. These canons, together with delivery and memory, have long been regarded as constituting the available means of persuasion. In the dissertation the canon of delivery, involving vocal utterance and gestures, will primarily be discussed in the chapter devoted to Shannon's emergence as a speaker. Since Shannon spoke extemporaneously, the canon of *memory* has little significance to the effective achievement of role duality.

The decision to focus on organization and logical appeals, apart from a consideration of ethical, emotional, and stylistic appeals, was based on research by John T. Cacioppo and Richard E. Petty.<sup>17</sup> Based on their research of how people cognitively process messages, Cacioppo and Petty have compellingly argued that persuasion proceeds along two avenues, what they term "central" and "peripheral" routes. Persuasion occurs along the central route when listeners diligently attend to issue-relevant arguments: attitude change along this route tends to be more enduring and more predictive of subsequent behavior than attitude change by the peripheral route. Persuasion along the peripheral route results from association with positive or negative cues, such as

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<sup>16</sup> Robert S. Cathcart, Post-Communication: Rhetorical Analysis and Evaluation, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1981) 2.

<sup>17</sup> Richard E. Petty and John T. Cacioppo, Attitudes and Persuasion: Classic and Contemporary Approaches (Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown, Pub., 1981).

credibility and emotional appeals. Petty and Cacioppo postulate that listeners choose the particular route in accordance with the amount of attention devoted to the argument--what they describe as the Elaboration Likelihood Model.<sup>18</sup> Consequently, chapter four considers how listeners may have regarded Shannon's messages had they followed the central route, and chapter five considers how listeners may have regarded the messages had they followed the peripheral route.

In chapter six, Shannon's effectiveness as a public speaker is considered. Thonssen, Baird, and Braden<sup>19</sup> suggest that a well-ordered speech can be considered effective if it is appropriate and reasonable, and if it is strategically worded and executed. The final test of effectiveness, in my estimation is whether the speech met with the success(es) intended. If one grants that speakers may juggle roles and have multiple intentions, then the critic is compelled to measure or at least consider effectiveness on different role levels. How effective was Shannon as fund raising college president, as slavery defender, as family provider?

The question of effectiveness on various levels strikes at the heart of what J. L. Austin calls **speech act theory**.<sup>20</sup> Viewing language as rule-governed, Austin maintains that speaking a language involves performing speech acts. These acts may be classified as locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. **Locutionary acts** deal with sense and meaning, the association of symbol and referent--with meaning. **Illocutionary acts** concern utterance with conventional force, e.g. ordering, commanding, etc.<sup>21</sup> **Perlocutionary acts (performatives)**

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<sup>18</sup> Richard E. Petty, John T. Cacioppo, and David Schumann, "Central and Peripheral Routes to Advertising Effectiveness: The Moderating Role of Involvement," Journal of Consumer Research 10 (1983): 135-146.

<sup>19</sup> Lester Thonssen, A. Craig Baird, and Waldo W. Braden, Speech Criticism, 2nd ed. (1970; New York: Ronald P., 1981) 21.

<sup>20</sup> J. L. Austin, How to Do Things with Words, ed. J. O. Urmson (New York: Oxford UP, 1970).

<sup>21</sup> Austin further divides locutionary acts into phonetic acts (utterance of noises), phatic acts (utterance of expressions), and rhetic acts (utterance of expressions with a particular sense and reference).

concern the effects brought about speech, the extra-communicative power of words to commit acts, e.g. to christen a ship, to take an oath before God to tell the truth, to make a bet, etc.<sup>22</sup>

In an attempt to apply speech act theory to rhetoric, James Benjamin theorized about the use of performatives.<sup>23</sup> One particular insight that Benjamin emphasized was that an audience which has "agreed" to accept the role of a given speaker and to accept the rhetor's words as sufficient proof, without regard to scrutiny, tends to short-circuit the usual route of persuasion. To apply the effect of performatives to Shannon's aristocratic southern audience: those wanting to hear arguments for slavery automatically approved of him without evaluating evidence. Inflammatory words hurled at the abolitionists provided instant cues of loyalty to the southern cause: such identification would prove useful in securing endowment funds.

For purposes of this dissertation, I opt to use the term "performatives" in a wider sense than Austin may have. Without fulfilling any narrow set of pre-conditions, performatives are viewed as acts producing both foreseeable and unforeseeable effects in audience attitude and action by speaking.<sup>24</sup> For a contemporary example, one might consider a study of protest rhetoric. In such a study Richard B. Gregg noted the instrumental (goal-oriented) usage of invective. The invective was most likely offensive (performative #1) to the establishment but to the protestors it had any number of perlocutionary effects. It:

<sup>22</sup> Austin later calls these acts "performatives" and specifies that certain conditions must exist to call a speech act a performative. First a conventional procedure involving certain utterances and certain people, such as the preacher at a wedding, must be present. Second, the circumstances must be appropriate and legitimate, not a wedding in a theatrical production. Correct and complete, third and fourth, respectively, procedures must be executed by all participants. Fifth, participants should intend to fulfill their pledges, and sixth, must actually do so.

<sup>23</sup> James Benjamin, "Performatives as a Rhetorical Construct," Philosophy and Rhetoric 9 (1976): 84-95.

<sup>24</sup> Paul Campbell faults Austin for ignoring the rhetorical function of language and charges that "all speech acts produce some effect upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of those involved in such acts, and, therefore, *all speech acts are perlocutions* [italics his]." Paul Newell Campbell, "A Rhetorical View of Locutionary, Illocutionary, and Perlocutionary Acts," Quarterly Journal of Speech 59 (1973): 289-293.

1. encouraged the continuation of distance between factions.
2. transformed the adversary into a symbolic enemy.
3. purged self-ills.
4. aided self-discovery by identifying against others.
5. enhanced self-identification by bidding kindred spirits.
6. formulated definition of situation, contributing to sense of control.
7. generated attention, possible fear and grudging respect from opponents.
8. was ego-gratifying to see proof or espoused views of reality.<sup>25</sup>

Appreciating the complexity of effectiveness, I propose to 1) determine or infer, as far as possible, Shannon's intentions in delivering the two slavery addresses, 2) isolate the primary intention, 3) measure results, and 4) speculate on the correlation of strategy, as demonstrated by the classical canons, with effects. Truthfulness of speaker claims and ethical implications are not ignored, but primary focus is devoted to whether the speaker, in this case Shannon, identified with his primary audience. One could even speak of a ratio of effectiveness among the roles to ascertain overall speaker success.

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<sup>25</sup> Richard B. Gregg, "The Ego-Function of the Rhetoric of Protest," Philosophy and Rhetoric 4 (1971): 71-89.

## The Emergence of James Shannon as a Speaker

### CHAPTER 2

Whether great speakers are born or whether they rise to the occasion has long been debated. The former emphasizes natural abilities and educational opportunities; the latter assumes that exigences<sup>1</sup> demanding rhetorical responses arise and dissipate. In this latter understanding of what constitutes rhetorical effectiveness, the rhetorically sensitive speaker must be astutely aware of the rhetorical situation and conscious of communication role and/or roles. A chapter devoted to James Shannon's biographical data, then, is not incidental but crucial to determining and understanding influences that may have borne on rhetorical choices.

Indeed, it may prove more profitable to consider effectiveness on the basis of how well a speaker recognized the *salient* communication roles in a given situation. That speakers may have other goals in mind when addressing a specific audience has been recognized in the familiar term "hidden agenda." The concept of role duality simply suggests that multiple goals may also include multiple audiences. It would not be surprising to learn that among these salient communication roles, a primary role will likely emerge. The task for critics is to judge how wisely the rhetor chose among the communication roles and furthermore to evaluate the speech on the basis of all the roles, not simply what the *critic* considered the primary role.

What communication roles did Shannon attempt to engage? I have suggested earlier that three salient roles have emerged from my study: debater, college president, provider. One could evaluate the speeches solely on the basis of logical arguments, but to do so would ignore other exigences bearing on the speech. That Shannon was president of a struggling private institution during the occasion of the first speech and in political hot water during the occasion of the second

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<sup>1</sup> Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric 1 (1968). Bitzer designates the term "exigence" to refer to the salient cause that gave rise to the "rhetorical situation;" a situation calling for a rhetorical response.

speech should not be ignored. Neither should the interpersonal role of family provider be dismissed since both speeches were given when Shannon contemplated career changes.

While it is true that Shannon preached extensively and was recognized as an accomplished evangelist, I have opted not to consider the role of preacher as particularly pertinent to the two speeches. In fact, Shannon may be regarded as seeking to escape religious role confinement. Granted that biblical material appeared in the selected speeches, the remarks were neither directed to congregants nor delivered in religious settings, but functioned as argumentative topoi that almost all pro-slavery spokespersons used. Furthermore, that Shannon's livelihood depended more on teaching than it ever did on preaching offers another reason to minimize his ministerial role. Finally, to recognize the role of college president in the 19th century is to give tacit recognition to Shannon's role as a preacher, anyway: many administrators had been educated in religious schools of learning. It was not uncommon, therefore, to find a preacher heading a school or literary institution.

#### Birth and Education in Ireland: 1799-1821

Legitimately or not, biographical sketches of Shannon have frequently tied his Irish descent to his rhetorical behavior. Charles Hunter Hamlin designated him the "militant James Shannon"<sup>2</sup>; Adron Doran called him a "tempestuous Irishman."<sup>3</sup> Even his first wife, Evelina, joked about his Irish disposition.<sup>4</sup>

Little is known about Shannon's formative years, and secondary sources often conflict over details as simple as whether he had a middle initial.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, some facts are verifiable, e.g.

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<sup>2</sup> Charles Hunter Hamlin, "The Militant James Shannon," Discipliana 4 (1944): 15.

<sup>3</sup> Adron Doran, "Shannon: A Tempestuous Irishman," The World Evangelist 14 (1985): 5.

<sup>4</sup> Evelina B. Dunham Shannon, letter to Frances Cary Moore, 18 Feb. 1836, Shannon Collection, Hargrett Library, U of Athens, GA.

<sup>5</sup> Mary K. Dains, Partners with God: Biographical Sketches of our Ministers 1832-1982 (Columbia, MO: First Christian Church, 1982) 32-36; M. C. Tiers, The Christian Portrait Gallery: Consisting of Historical and Biographical Sketches and Photographic Portraits of Christian Preachers and Others (Cincinnati, OH: M.C. Tiers, Pub., 1864) 129-130. An

Shannon was born 23 April 1799 in Monaghan County, northern Ireland, to Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Shannon. All available information suggests that the Shannons were farmers; however their financial success is unclear. Education must have been stressed in the home since their three sons, James, Joseph, and John, all earned professional degrees: Joseph and John became medical doctors. John, late in life, characterized his father as a "farmer in easy circumstances."<sup>6</sup> According to family members, Matthew Shannon built a school on his farm and employed teachers to provide his children with a rudimentary English education in preparation for advancement to a classical school; such would indicate that the Shannons prospered.

Family members are particularly prone to exaggerate fond memories of loved ones, and Cornelia Shannon White, daughter of James Shannon, contributed her apocryphal story by writing that Shannon's parents kept the candles hid to prevent him from injuring his youthful eyes through study.<sup>7</sup> Cornelia further suggested that Shannon inherited the intellectual prowess of his maternal grandfather, Judge Bodley, of whom Edmund Burke is supposedly credited with saying, "If England in all her realm possessed an ounce of brains, that man Bodley possessed three fourths of them."<sup>8</sup> Some confusion exists over the Bodley connection to the Shannon family. James Shannon Mountjoy<sup>9</sup>, great-nephew of James Shannon, asserted that the Shannons were Protestant Irish of Antrim who dated back to 1690. Mountjoy associated a much earlier Bodley ancestor with

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examination of Shannon papers, signatures, and grave stone reveals no middle initial, although "E.", "P.", and "S." occasionally appear in secondary sources. Actually secondary sources also disagree occasionally over whether Shannon was born April 22 or 23. The gravestone records April 23.

<sup>6</sup> John Shannon, letter to James Mays Shannon, 25 July 1859, Shannon Collection, Hargrett Library, U of Athens, GA.

<sup>7</sup> Cornelia Shannon White, Diary, ts., Shannon Collection, Hargrett Library, U of Athens, GA, n.d., 27.

<sup>8</sup> White 27.

<sup>9</sup> James Shannon Mountjoy, "The John W. Mountjoy Family," ts., Shannon Collection, Hargrett Library, U of Athens, GA, 26 Jan. 1933: 18,19. Son of Rebecca Shannon, Joseph's orphaned daughter whom James raised.



the Shannons, Sir Thomas Bodley, the Oxford scholar who formed the Bodleian Library. Mountjoy believed, however, that Bodley was related only through marriage: no mention of the later Bodley was made.

Most secondary sources suggest that the Matthew Shannons were deeply religious Presbyterians whose beliefs became dear to their eldest son. Jacob Creath, Jr., a contemporary and colleague of Shannon's, recorded that by age thirteen Shannon resolved to devote his life to preaching;<sup>10</sup> the resolve turned to intensive training at Belfast.

In the fall of 1815, Shannon, now sixteen years old, entered the Belfast (later Royal Belfast) Academical Institution. The institute was still in its infancy when Shannon enrolled. In 1807 subscriptions for the institute began with 16,000 pounds soon contributed. Parliamentary approval and subsidy commitment in 1810 enabled the "ambitious" project to take brick and mortar form. The institute may legitimately be described as ambitious for a number of reasons. Peter Brooke observed that the proposal to operate both a school and college was unique, especially considering that the last university established in Great Britain had previously been Trinity College in Dublin near the end of the sixteenth century.<sup>11</sup> Regarded by Brooke as a precursor to University College in London, the institute applied no religious tests and was managed by elected subscribers. Ideally, plans called for providing a general education supplemented by instruction from professors appointed by the various denominations, including the Catholics and Anglicans. In reality, the Catholics and Anglicans opposed such an arrangement, but to the Ulster Presbyterian Synod and Seceder Presbyterians, closer seminary training replaced having to travel to Scottish universities. The non-sectarian nature of the school led George Benn in his history of Belfast to observe, "In one of the classes last year, there were persons of four religious

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<sup>10</sup> Donan, P. Memoir of Jacob Creath, Jr. (Cincinnati: R. W. Carroll & Co., Pub., 1872) 226.

<sup>11</sup> Peter Brooke, Ulster Presbyterianism: The Historical Perspective 1610-1970 (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd., 1987) 139-140.

persuasions, and Protestants of the Established Church have frequently attended the classes with considerable profit."<sup>12</sup>

The college classes opened for the first time in November 1815: the academic year running from November to May. According to Benn, students normally studied logic and belles lettres the first year, moral philosophy the second, and natural philosophy the third.<sup>13</sup> These core classes were supplemented by Hebrew, Greek, Latin, mathematics, and elocution. Upon passing the necessary exams to receive a general certificate from the institution, one could then begin the study of divinity under the Synod or Seceder professor.

Shannon performed admirably that first year and in the years to follow. From a class of twenty-one students, Shannon was adjudged the best Latin scholar in 1815 and received a prize medal.<sup>14</sup> The following May he took the first prize in Greek. Indeed, Shannon's exemplar career in Belfast resulted in prizes from many areas of study: including moral philosophy, natural philosophy, and mathematics. Card-like documents from several of Shannon's teachers attest to his having completed the following courses: logic and belles lettres (1815-16), elocution (1816), mathematics (1816-1817), public ethics (1816-1817), natural philosophy (1817-1818), Hebrew (1819-20), divinity and church history (1819-1820, Ulster Synod), and anatomy and physiology (1819-1820).<sup>15</sup> These documents, most of which referred to superior achievement, were possibly either prize certificates or credentials used to supplement letters of recommendation.

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<sup>12</sup> George Benn, The History of the Town of Belfast... (Belfast: A. Mackay, Jr., 1823) 126.

<sup>13</sup> Benn 123.

<sup>14</sup> James Shannon, letter to James Taylor, 17 March 1840, Shannon Collection, Transylvania U Archives, Lexington, KY. The medal that Shannon won is on display in the President's Hall of Culver Stockton College, Canton, Missouri. The engraved year, 1810, refers to the founding of the institute and not to the date Shannon was awarded the medal. See Appendix A, Illustration 3.

<sup>15</sup> Shannon Collection, U of Columbia, MO, Archives, Lewis Hall; I. Doisy, letter to James Shannon, 21 July 1821, indicates that Shannon was proficient in French.

Of interest to this research, Shannon studied elocution from January to May, 1816, under the direction of James Sheridan Knowles.<sup>16</sup> Knowles, at this time, was beginning to distinguish himself as both an actor and dramatist. Holding a medical degree from the University of Aberdeen, Knowles had abandoned medicine and turned to the stage. Both his performances and his plays had met with approval in England as well as Ireland. Surely the enthusiasm and genius of Knowles had some influence on Shannon's oratorical performance. Commenting on Knowles' method of teaching, Sir Joseph Napier remarked, "His habits were altogether those of a child of genius--hence his discipline was irregular--he was neither our schoolmaster nor our schoolfellow--he was both, and sometimes more than both, but we loved him, and he taught us."<sup>17</sup>

Most of what is known about Shannon's early life is derived from these credentials and letters of recommendation. Evidently Shannon received the general certificate about 1818 and was recommended for seminary training through the Synod of Ulster. Having studied one session (1819-1820) in theology<sup>18</sup>, he then turned to teaching in James Carley's school at Antrim. Appointed to "first assistant" Shannon taught Latin, Greek, French, and a general course in English education. Carley, subsequently, recommended Shannon as a "valuable acquisition to any Seminary."<sup>19</sup> Obviously, Shannon still entertained the idea of becoming a Presbyterian preacher,

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<sup>16</sup> Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee, editors, "James Sheridan Knowles," The Dictionary of National Biography (London: Oxford UP, 1949) 297-300; Alfred Webb, "James Sheridan Knowles," A Compendium of Irish Biography (Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son, 1878) 278, 279. Reportedly, Knowles declined the position of headmaster of English studies at Belfast Academical Institute in favor of his father, James Knowles, a noted schoolmaster and lexicographer. His middle name reflects his father's first cousin, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, renowned playwright and leading orator in the House of Commons.

<sup>17</sup> Webb 178. Quotation of Sir Joseph Napier.

<sup>18</sup> William Smyth, letter of recommendation for James Shannon, 1 Dec. 1821, Shannon Collection, U of Columbia, MO, Archives, Lewis Hall.

<sup>19</sup> James Carley, letter of recommendation for James Shannon, 16 Oct. 1821, Shannon Collection, U of Columbia, MO, Archives, Lewis Hall.

and these credentials and letters of recommendation would aid him many more times in his diverse career.

### Opportunity in Georgia: 1821-1835

On 15 October 1821 Shannon, having taught a year and a half at Carley's school, received a letter from James Thomson, his former mathematics teacher. Thomson informed Shannon of an opportunity to take charge of an academy in Georgia and summoned him to Belfast for an interview with Dr. William McWhir. Thomson further indicated that the job would pay at least 300 pounds sterling annually and required one to teach the classics, French, and mathematics.<sup>20</sup> Dr. McWhir, a native of Ireland, had presided over Sunbury Academy for thirty years; through his efforts the school earned the reputation of being the "Yale of the South."<sup>21</sup> Satisfactorily meeting McWhir's expectations, Shannon accepted the position provided his travel expenses could be paid.<sup>22</sup>

Immigration documents reveal that Shannon arrived in the United States by way of Charleston.<sup>23</sup> Overland he traveled with McWhir to Sunbury. Founded in 1734 by Gen. James Oglethorpe, Sunbury served as a coastal defense, one of several fortifications protecting Savannah from Spanish invasion. In 1761 Sunbury was recognized as an official port of entry but never became a thriving metropolis. In fact, after 1825 public elections were discontinued, and the

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<sup>20</sup> James Thomson, letter to James Shannon, 15 October 1821, Shannon Collection, U of Columbia, MO, Archives, Lewis Hall.

<sup>21</sup> H. B. Folsom, "Sunbury, the Joppa of Georgia,"; William Harden, "William McWhir," Georgia Historical Quarterly 1 (1917): 197-202.

<sup>22</sup> James Shannon, letter to Dr. William McWhir, 24 Sept. 1832; James Shannon, letter to Dr. William McWhir, 26 Sept. 1832; James Shannon, letter to Dr. William McWhir, 19 Jan. 1833, Shannon Collection, Joint Collection U of MO Western Historical Manuscript Collection--Columbia and State Historical Society of MO Manuscripts. The lengthy correspondence concerned charges from McWhir that Shannon had been ungrateful and had schemed to take control of the academy. Shannon, in defense, stated that he had paid McWhir, with interest, for the voyage to America; despite any necessity to do so. Furthermore, he denied attempts to "get the academy into his own hands."

<sup>23</sup> P. William Filby and Mary K. Meyer, eds., Passenger and Immigration Lists Index, Vol. 3 (Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1981) 1923.

town eventually disappeared altogether. The crowning glory of Sunbury, however, centered on its co-educational, Presbyterian-oriented school, Sunbury Academy which was chartered in 1788. An 1807 listing of the scholars of the academy revealed that females constituted twenty-five percent of the student body.<sup>24</sup>

In 1822 two events led to a rift between Dr. McWhir and Shannon. First, McWhir evidently retired under coercion from the commissioners of the school,<sup>25</sup> and Shannon, who had been first assistant, was named his successor.<sup>26</sup> Second, Shannon who had been accepted by the newly organized Georgia Presbytery<sup>27</sup> and awaited only formal ordination incensed the Presbyterians by declaring immersion as the only Christian baptism. Jesse H. Campbell, former student of Shannon's, recalled that Shannon's address on baptism was held in the Sunbury Baptist meeting house and that the topic itself had been suggested by McWhir:

The Baptists were highly incensed that a beardless youth should take such a liberty--but were pacified when informed that the announcement was read with the consent of the venerable pastor. The Presbyterians, on the other hand, were jubilant in anticipation of the drubbing the Baptists were about to receive, and that, in their own house. Thus matters stood, until the evening arrived, when the population for ten miles around

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<sup>24</sup> "A Catalogue of the Scholars of the Sunbury Academy, July 30, 1807," Sunbury Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah. Whether these were graduates of the school or students enrolled during 1807 is unclear.

<sup>25</sup> McWhir (1759-1851) would have been 63 years of age at the time.

<sup>26</sup> James Shannon, letter to James Taylor, 17 March 1840. Shannon informed Mr. Taylor of Bacon College that Sunbury guaranteed that his salary would not fall below \$1,333.33 a year and also promised to double it. Although Shannon never disclosed his final salary at Sunbury, he indicated it was more than \$1,600, what Bacon College offered.

<sup>27</sup> Hardin 198. McWhir's name headed the role of ministers when the Georgia Presbytery was formed 3 November 1821; Shannon to McWhir, 19 Jan. 1833. Evidently McWhir had used his influence in the Georgia Presbytery so that Shannon might be accepted contrary to the normal rule of discipline. Shannon replied that McWhir's assertion of "becoming security" for him was altogether novel and that his acceptance into the Presbytery was not because of McWhir, but because McWhir simply reported the truth about him.

turned out literally en masse to hear the Lecture.<sup>28</sup>

Following this abrupt break with the Presbyterians, Shannon in the spring of 1823 was immersed by the Rev. Charles O. Screven and received into the Baptist fellowship at Sunbury. The year 1823 proved to be eventful for other reasons, too. On 22 October 1823 Shannon married Evelina Belmont Dunham,<sup>29</sup> and on 15 November 1823 was ordained as a Baptist preacher. That the Baptists reveled in Shannon's conversion and ordination may be observed in a printed sermon on the occasion of his ordination.<sup>30</sup>

The recollections of Jesse Campbell are significant in that they give an insight into Shannon's character not always mentioned. Campbell, who studied under Shannon and who later became his first assistant while residing with the young couple, described Shannon as "remarkably cheerful in his disposition, was fond of company, and took much pleasure in both vocal and instrumental music."<sup>31</sup> Under Shannon's leadership the student population at Sunbury Academy increased from forty or fifty boys and girls to sixty or seventy.

As an ordained Baptist minister Shannon had occasion to preach along the southeastern seaboard. Fortunately for historians, he recorded not only the date and place in which he preached but also the biblical texts used.<sup>32</sup> This public exposure advanced his reputation as both a preacher

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<sup>28</sup> Jesse Harrison Campbell, "Recollections of Rev. James Shannon," 29 January 1861, Shannon Collection, Hargrett Library, U of Athens, GA. Campbell's recollections had been solicited in the hope of preparing a biography on Shannon.

<sup>29</sup> Miss Dunham's parents had died in South Carolina and was the ward of her wealthy aunt, Mrs. James Carter. Mrs. Carter died soon after Evelina's marriage. As one of four heirs, Evelina inherited both servants and money.

<sup>30</sup> H. J. Ripley, "Sermon, Preached in Sunbury, Geo. November 15, 1823, at the Ordination of Rev. Jas. Shannon," (Savannah: Michael J. Kappel, 1823) Shannon Collection, Transylvania U Archives, Lexington, KY. Ripley's sermon was entitled "Speaking the Truth in Love" a somewhat ironical description of Shannon's preaching. The ceremony also included a "charge" given by Rev. Charles O. Screven and the presentation of "the right hand of fellowship" by Rev. Adiel Sherwood.

<sup>31</sup> Jesse H. Campbell, "Recollections."

<sup>32</sup> James Shannon, "Sermon Journals," Shannon Collection, Hargrett Library, U of Athens, GA.

and a scholar and led to his acceptance of the pastorate of the Augusta Baptist Church in 1826 for \$1,200 a year.<sup>33</sup> Shannon replaced Rev. William T. Brantly, Sr., who had moved to Philadelphia to pastor a church there and to edit The Columbian Star, a Baptist periodical. Brantly was harshly criticized for the handsome salary paid him: his chief critic was Alexander Campbell, a controversial Baptist minister who edited the Christian Baptist.<sup>34</sup> Shannon, a subscriber to the paper, would eventually come to agree with many of Campbell's religious views and leave the Baptist church.

In 1827 Shannon delivered an address on education at the Georgia Baptist Convention which was favorably received and which renewed interest in the establishment of Mercer College, a Baptist school in Macon.<sup>35</sup> Shannon, as had Brantly, served as rector of Richmond Academy in Augusta, but little is known of his teaching load or duties.<sup>36</sup> That same year a tide of religious fervor engulfed the surrounding counties and Shannon, along with others, participated in revivals that met with spectacular results.<sup>37</sup> In 1829, Shannon's first child, Anna Maria was born. In 1830, when Shannon accepted a teaching position in Athens, the Augusta Baptist Church had grown to 128 members.

For the next five years Shannon headed the department of ancient languages at Franklin College, later the University of Georgia at Athens. The move was particularly applauded by the

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<sup>33</sup> "William Theophilus Brantly, Sen.," History of the Baptist Denomination in Georgia (Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, n.d.): 49-55. Brantly's salary at Richmond Academy was \$3,000 per year, plus housing. Whether Shannon received both incomes is unknown.

<sup>34</sup> Alexander Campbell, "The Columbian Star," The Christian Baptist 5 (1828): 236-239.

<sup>35</sup> J. Edward Moseley, Disciples of Christ in Georgia (St. Louis: The Bethany P., 1954): 142.

<sup>36</sup> Anna Olive Jones, History of the First Baptist Church Augusta, Georgia 1817-1967 (Columbia, SC: R. L. Bryan Co., 1967).

<sup>37</sup> Creeth 227. According to Creeth, 10,000 people were added to Baptist ranks; B. D. Ragsdale, Story of Georgia Baptists, vol. I (Atlanta: Foote & Davies Co., 1932): 43. Ragsdale stated the membership of the Georgia Association increased by more than 50%.

Baptists who previously had not been represented on the faculty: as with many colleges of the day the Presbyterian influence predominated. While at Athens, Shannon helped found the local Baptist church and served as its first pastor.<sup>38</sup> Again, Shannon re-examined his religious thinking on baptism: not so much the mode, which led to his leaving the Presbyterian church, but rather the purpose. When Shannon contemplated a move to Louisiana and solicited letters of reference, recommendations from college trustees and church officials spoke glowingly of Shannon's work in Athens. The spring before the move, Frances Cary Shannon was born.

### **Transition, Turmoil, and Tragedy in Louisiana: 1835-1840**

In 1835 Shannon accepted the presidency of the College of Louisiana in Jackson. The school had been in existence since 1825, yet was still struggling. Shannon's stay in Jackson proved to be a transitional period in his life. First, the opportunity to head a state school would lead to an administrative career in future years. Second, troubling religious questions which had left Shannon unsettled before his move to Louisiana led him to affiliate with the Churches of Christ.<sup>39</sup> Third, Shannon's wife, Evelina, died in 1836 leaving two small children. In 1837 he married Frances Cary Moore of Athens, who had been a close friend of the family.<sup>40</sup>

The transitional years in Louisiana were to be prolific ones for Shannon. Desiring to defend his newly held religious views, to gain acceptance and approval of leaders in the Churches of

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<sup>38</sup> Charlotte Thomas Marshall, "The Adventurous Life of James Shannon, Our First Pastor," 30 Nov. 1988. Mrs. Marshall has thoroughly researched the Georgia years of James Shannon's life and is presently contemplating the compilation and edition of the Shannon letters. The Shannon Collection at Hargrett Library on the Athens' campus is the result of Mrs. Marshall's enterprise and close working-relationship with Mrs. Richard Shannon Graham, widow of the great-great-grandson of James Shannon.

<sup>39</sup> Creath 227, 228. At the Georgia Baptist Convention of 1834 in Morgan County, Shannon spoke for an hour and a half endeavoring an audience of five or six thousand to accept baptism as a prerequisite to salvation. The discourse was later published in a periodical affiliated with Churches of Christ; James Shannon, "How to Be Saved," The Christian Preacher 2 (1937): 145-183.

<sup>40</sup> See Appendix A, Illustrations 1 and 2.



Christ, and to promote the state college, Shannon wrote no less than fifteen published articles.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, Shannon's Inaugural speech so impressed the board of trustees that they ordered it printed in both English and French and sent to the Louisiana legislature.<sup>42</sup>

In April 1836 Shannon organized the Church of Christ in Jackson with five charter members who met in the college chapel;<sup>43</sup> soon afterward, he reported that five more had been added but access to the chapel had been denied. Perhaps the greatest religious contribution Shannon made in Jackson was converting D. L. Phares, a student, who later earned a medical degree and furthered restoration efforts in Woodville, Mississippi.<sup>44</sup>

In 1839 Alexander Campbell whose writings had demonstrably influenced Shannon, visited Jackson. Campbell, who had left the Presbyterian Church for the Baptists (as had Shannon), finally left the Baptists as well in order to restore the primitive church in doctrine and in practice. The idea of restoration, of accepting the Bible alone, of abandoning human creeds appealed to many; those who joined Campbell's cause were soon labeled "Reform Baptists" or "Campbellites." Shannon's sympathies for Campbell's cause met with hostile reaction from Baptists in Jackson who discouraged their members from hearing Shannon and Campbell.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> The following articles, in addition to "How to Be Saved", were discovered in a literature research: James Shannon, "Conversion," The Christian Preacher 3 (1838): 169-174; "1838 Commencement Address," Southwestern Journal 1 (1838): 233-236; "An Inquiry into the Terms of Christian Union," The Christian Preacher 3 (1838): 145-165; "Method of Salvation," The Christian Preacher 4 (1839): 101-110; "Ordination, No. 1," The Heretic Detector 3 (1839): 209-217; "Ordination, No. 2," The Heretic Detector 3 (1839): 217-222; "Ordination, No. 3," The Heretic Detector 3 (1839): 310-316; "New Birth," The Heretic Detector 3 (1839): 73-74; "Success of the Gospel," The Christian Preacher 3 (1838): 280; "Communications," The Christian Index 5 (1837): 536-538; 6 (1838): 85-87; 103-106; 152-154; 199-202; 383-385; 7 (1839): 213-214.

<sup>42</sup> "Faculty Minutes of the College of Louisiana," 19 Dec. 1835, Archives, Centenary College, Shreveport, LA.

<sup>43</sup> Millennial Harbinger 1836: 327.

<sup>44</sup> Phares named a son "James Shannon" and would later receive an honorary degree from Bacon College.

<sup>45</sup> Joe B. Nesom, editor, The Historical Papers of First Baptist Church Jackson, Louisiana, Organized 1835. "Resolved that we the Baptist Church of Christ at Jackson will not open our doors

During this visit, Shannon's second wife affiliated with the church.<sup>46</sup> Campbell's chief reason for coming, however, was to encourage Shannon to accept the presidency of Bacon College, the first college begun by Churches of Christ.<sup>47</sup> About a month after Campbell's visit, Frances gave birth to the Shannon's first son, James Mayes Shannon.

That same year (1839) a handbook adopted by the board of trustees was printed.<sup>48</sup> Speaking of the duties of the president, the handbook stipulated that the junior and/or senior classes be taught rhetoric, composition, criticism, mental and moral philosophy, logic, history, evidences of Christianity, laws of nations, constitutional law, and political economy. Public speaking received particular emphasis on Saturdays; given one week prior notice and topic approval from the president, students addressed both their peers and the assembled faculty.

During Shannon's presidency, the College of Louisiana built a west dormitory wing, which has since been restored and designated a commemorative area.<sup>49</sup> The school also graduated its first student, who happened to be D. L. Phares; evidently no one had completed the requirements of the college since its beginning in 1825. Although advances in attendance were made, faculty strife, religious prejudice, and the board of trustees' refusal to confer an honorary degree on an Irish friend made Kentucky sound more appealing to Shannon.<sup>50</sup>

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to A. Campbell or any of his known followers." Saturday before the second Lord's day of January 1839; H. K. White, "To the Rev. J. Shannon," letter to the editor, The Louisianian (Clinton, LA) n.d.; James Shannon, "For the Louisianian," letter to the editor, The Louisianian (Clinton, LA) 4 Nov. 1837.

<sup>46</sup> Christian Preacher 4 (1839): 110; William A. Wilson, Jr., "Disciples of Christ in Louisiana 1826-1860," thesis, Louisiana State U, 1934.

<sup>47</sup> Alexander Campbell, letters to James Shannon, 24 June 1837; 27 Dec. 1839.

<sup>48</sup> "Laws for the Government of the College of Louisiana," Robert C. Carmen Printer, 17 July 1839, Hill Memorial Library, Louisiana State U, Baton Rouge.

<sup>49</sup> See Appendix A, Illustration 4.

<sup>50</sup> William Hamilton Nelson, A Burning Torch and a Flaming Fire: The Story of Centenary College of Louisiana (Nashville: Methodist Publishing House, 1931). In 1845 the campus was sold to the Methodists who assumed the college's earlier history under the name Centenary College, in honor of the 100th anniversary of Methodism. The campus was subsequently removed to

### Struggle in Kentucky: 1840-1849

Accepting the presidency of Bacon College meant a decrease in income but offered prestige and a chance to demonstrate church leadership.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, in a place where the restoration movement was well rooted, Shannon could enjoy harmonious relations with the community at large and particularly the college faculty. Named after Francis Bacon, the college originally was located in Georgetown and later moved to Harrodsburg.<sup>52</sup> Early class rolls reveal that students came from all over the South, but the school suffered a setback when Alexander Campbell, the leading voice of the movement, opened Bethany College in Bethany, Virginia (now West Virginia). Shannon would remain at Bacon College for a decade, but all ten years would be marred by financial struggles to keep the institution open. According to reports from the school, Shannon gave "particular attention to the improvement of the students in public speaking."<sup>53</sup>

Despite the struggles, Kentucky offered Shannon numerous opportunities to preach in evangelistic meetings and to further the school. Undoubtedly benefitting from his father-in-law's death and estate, Shannon built a lovely, but not overly ornate, home named Aspen Hall in Harrodsburg.<sup>54</sup> At least five other noteworthy events occurred in the Kentucky years. First, Shannon not only participated in a unity meeting in Lexington in 1841 but was also asked to

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Shreveport in 1908; Helen Ruth Bryson, "A History of Centenary College," thesis, Louisiana State U, 1941.

<sup>51</sup> James Shannon, letter to James Taylor, 17 March 1840. Shannon accepted the position at Bacon for \$1600 annually, roughly one half of what he received in Jackson, \$3,000. In this letter he stated that Bacon College ought to bear his moving expense; James Shannon, letter to Samuel Hatch, 22 April 1840. Shannon again referred to the moving expense, but it is unclear if he were reimbursed.

<sup>52</sup> Dwight E. Stevenson, The Bacon College Story: 1836-1865 (Lexington, KY: The College of the Bible, 1962.) See Appendix A, Illustrations 5 and 6.

<sup>53</sup> "Editorial Correspondence," Millennial Harbinger (1846): 429. Article taken from an unspecified issue of The Protestant Unionist.

<sup>54</sup> See Appendix A, Illustration 7.

provide a keynote speech, along with Campbell.<sup>55</sup> Second, he served on a committee of four appointed by Alexander Campbell to make necessary preparations for Campbell's debate in 1843 with N. L. Rice, a Presbyterian minister. The debates became a popular means for the "restorationists" to present their claims, and Alexander Campbell's fame, can be attributed largely to his successful debating skills and editorial position.

The third event might seem trivial but underscored an ironic twist of fate: rivalry began to hinder the progress of the restoration movement. Shannon came under brotherhood scrutiny when Campbell chided him for delivering a funeral address on the occasion of Andrew Jackson's death.<sup>56</sup> Was Shannon threatening Alexander Campbell's ego and leadership status? perhaps the ego, but not the leadership. Having published so many articles in a variety of journals in distant Louisiana, Shannon's voice in Kentucky was all but silenced, except for defenses, in the brotherhood papers.<sup>57</sup> In Alexander Campbell's shadow, both Shannon and Bacon College's future became uncertain. Despite Campbell's earlier belief that both colleges would succeed, it became increasingly evident that tension existed between the two schools.

One reason that Shannon may have received little journal space in church publications revolved around his outspoken remarks on slavery and his involvement in politics. Stressing unity through restoration, editors in the Churches of Christ tended to minimize political differences and particularly avoided the slavery issue. In 1844 Shannon delivered his "Philosophy of Human Happiness" speech to the Franklin Society of Bacon College, which could be considered the fourth major event. Following a financial crisis in 1845 Shannon tendered his resignation, but was persuaded to continue for another term. During the Kentucky Constitutional Convention of 1849 the address was printed and circulated in an attempt to defeat emancipation

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<sup>55</sup> J. T. Johnson, "Union Christian Meeting," Millennial Harbinger (1841): 258-260.

<sup>56</sup> Alexander Campbell, "Funeral Sermons," Millennial Harbinger (1846): 51-56.

<sup>57</sup> There are two notable exceptions: James Shannon, "Defamation Again," The Christian Messenger 12 (1841): 228-235; "Pouring and Sprinkling" 332-335.

efforts. Faced with continued financial struggles, Shannon began to look for greener pastures. After a visit to Columbia, Missouri, in 1848 and subsequent communications with officials at the University of Missouri, Shannon left Harrodsburg enroute to Columbia.

The fifth major event concerned Shannon's growing family. In 1841, Evelina was born (named after Shannon's first wife) and died a short time later. Other children born during the Kentucky years included: Richard Dudley in 1843, Mary Eugenia in 1845, Virginia Caroline in 1847, and Charles Edward in 1849.

### Challenges and Death in Missouri: 1850-1859

Accepting the presidency of the University of Missouri upon the guarantee that he would be permitted to preach,<sup>58</sup> Shannon embarked upon a term (1850-56) that would be filled with bitter confrontation.<sup>59</sup> While president, Shannon was constantly besieged by complaints surrounding his religious and political views. The Columbia newspapers were replete with letters to the editor, to and from Shannon. To cite a couple, there were charges that Shannon had planned to place the university into the hands of his denomination and that he had ordered a copy of Calhoun's defense of slavery to be placed in the library. An investigation later cleared Shannon of any wrong doing, but it was clear that a number of people were dissatisfied with him. Students, however, spoke glowingly of him; more than one told investigators that Shannon continually urged them as scholars to "call no man, master!"<sup>60</sup>

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58 James Shannon, letter to T. R. H. Smith, 30 May 1849.

59 Jonas Viles, The University of Missouri: A Centennial History 1839-1939 (Columbia: E. W. Stephens Co., 1939); Frank F. Stephens, A History of the University of Missouri (Columbia: U of Missouri Press, 1962); David E. Harrell, "James Shannon: Preacher, Educator, and Fire-Eater," Missouri Historical Review 63 (1969): 135-170; George R. Lee, "James Shannon's Search for Happiness," Missouri Historical Review 73 (1978): 71-84. See Appendix A, Illustrations 8 and 9.

60 "Report of the Majority on the Missouri State University, to the Seventeenth General Assembly," (Jefferson City: James Lusk, 1853): 18.

Shannon continued to preach and helped found Christian College, a girls' school in Columbia affiliated with Churches of Christ.<sup>61</sup> In 1855 Shannon delivered a pro-slavery address in Lexington, Missouri, near the Kansas border; political opponents, incensed by the speech, passed legislation that vacated the board of trustees and forbade university faculty from preaching. To their dismay, the new board re-elected Shannon, and he continued to preach for a time, without remuneration from the church. Despite re-election to a six year term at Columbia, Shannon resigned, citing his desire to preach, and accepted the presidency of newly established Christian University, now Culver-Stockton College in Canton, Missouri.<sup>62</sup> In honor of his tenure at Columbia, the trustees awarded Shannon the honorary degree, L.L. D.

Moving to Canton in 1856, Shannon served with distinction as president of Christian University until his death on 25 February 1859. Actually his health had begun to fail a year earlier, when he suffered a stroke; death, however, was attributed to asthmatic complications. At the time of his death, Shannon left a large family, including one toddler. Cornelia Belmont was born in 1851 and was followed by John Cary Shannon in 1853, William Hudson Shannon in 1856, and Lenoir Douglass in 1858.

During Shannon's three year period at Christian University, much of his work was devoted to fund-raising. Through the efforts of D. Pat Henderson, a close friend of the family, Mrs. Shannon consented to a biography of her husband; P. S. Fall<sup>63</sup> of Nashville contemplated the project. Some preliminary work was done, for instance Jesse Campbell's recollections were secured, but the Civil War prevented the project from coming to fruition. In 1865 Mrs. Shannon died, and given the outcome of the war and Shannon's intense pro-slavery views, the project was

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<sup>61</sup> Allean Lemmon Hale, Petticoat Pioneer: The Christian College Story, 1851-1951 (Columbia: Christian College, 1951).

<sup>62</sup> George R. Lee, Culver-Stockton College: The First 130 Years (Canton, MO: Culver-Stockton College, 1984). See Appendix A, Illustrations 10 and 11.

<sup>63</sup> Fall's son, James, had attended Bacon College 1838-? Bacon College Enrollment Book, Transylvania Archives, Lexington, KY.

abandoned. In honor of its first president, Culver-Stockton College named a dormitory, James Shannon Hall. Within its chambers a bronze plaque memorializes James Shannon:

A native of Ireland, James Shannon was a pioneer educator, classical scholar, Christian Church minister, and American patriot. He resigned as the second president of the University of Missouri to become the first president of Christian University, now Culver-Stockton College. Although death in 1859 limited his service to three years, his brilliant scholarship and educational background gave stature to the institution. In his honor, this building is named James Shannon Hall. Dedicated November 10, 1962.<sup>64</sup>

### Speech Delivery

As a public speaker Shannon was praised for the enthusiasm with which he undertook each rhetorical activity, be it sermon or secular speech. Jesse H. Campbell commented:

He was an enthusiast by nature, and he entered with enthusiasm into every thing that came properly before him. If I were to add that he was prone to ultraism, I trust that it would not be taken unkindly by his friends, for I claim to be one of his warmest friends and most ardent admirers. From the constitution of his mind, he could not be otherwise. Yet a more sincere, pure minded, honest upright man I have never known.<sup>65</sup>

During Shannon's career as a college president, he had occasion to present multiple inaugural addresses and commencement speeches: several were printed by order and consequently received wide publicity. While this study has been limited to two anti-abolitionist speeches of

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<sup>64</sup> "Dormitory Is Named Shannon Hall," Culver-Stockton College Bulletin 48 (1962): 4-8; Herbert P. Davis, "The Pioneer We Honor," Shannon Hall dedication speech, 10 Nov. 1962.

<sup>65</sup> Jesse H. Campbell, "Recollections."

Shannon, a scarcity of critical comment about delivery necessitated a general description of message presentation: instead of delivery, the newspaper accounts tended to focus on style and invention, as will be demonstrated in the analysis of speeches.

Rhetorical critics Thonssen, Baird, and Braden note four dimensions of delivery: mode of delivery, general appearance, bodily action, and voice.<sup>66</sup> By Shannon's own admission he preferred the extemporaneous mode of delivery.<sup>67</sup> However, his early sermons were written word for word. Later, at least in the sermon journals, only outlines appeared; still later, entries were shortened to include only the biblical text used. Like many veteran public speakers, Shannon may have changed his mode of delivery from reading a prepared address to speaking extemporaneously. The extant speeches discovered have been preserved, notwithstanding, because they were manuscript speeches designed for specific occasions: inaugurals, commencements, speeches before literary societies. Shannon gave the anti-abolitionist speech in Kentucky before a literary society at Bacon College, after which it was printed and undoubtedly received literary polishing. The anti-abolitionist speech in Missouri represented "the speech" Shannon had presented at several locations during the summer of 1855: experience which should have enabled Shannon to speak extemporaneously.

Four descriptions of Shannon's general appearance, gesture usage, and speaking voice have survived. The earliest and most detailed, by evangelist Walter Scott, described Shannon's preaching in a Kentucky revival in 1840:

Pres. S. is a logician, philologist, and rhetorician as well as a learned theologian and successful evangelist. His action is full of vivacity, and his manner earnest in the extreme. The benevolence which beams from his open countenance disarms suspicion and renders

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<sup>66</sup> Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 522.

<sup>67</sup> James Shannon, undated ms., Shannon Collection, U of Columbia, MO, Archives, Lewis Hall.



every thing he says acceptable.<sup>68</sup>

An 1850 report of Shannon's preaching in Missouri noted "his discourses were able, logical and eloquent." When describing audience reaction, the report continued that "he 'took well' with the people."<sup>69</sup> In another example, a reporter from the St. Louis Times, in a detailed summary of Shannon's lecture to medical students, observed that "his views were expressed in forcible and striking language, and though not devoid of rhetorical embellishment, the lecturer showed that he had devoted his attention much more to the matter, than the style of his oratory." Furthermore, the "manner and style of expression gave additional force."<sup>70</sup> The fourth assessment of Shannon's delivery came from J. E. Hawley who visited Columbia in 1853 in prospects of opening a medical practice. Hawley concluded that Shannon was "one of the most splendid orators of the south and south-west." Additionally, upon hearing Shannon preach, he remarked: "Today I heard him preach one of the most eloquent sermons, to which it has ever been my good fortune to listen."<sup>71</sup>

### Summary

At the Royal Belfast Academical Institution Shannon was exposed to a classical education in a non-denominational environment which enabled him to study elocution under Knowles. Beginning as a first assistant in Mr. Carley's school in Atrim, Shannon seized the opportunity to teach at Sunbury, Georgia, and was soon named headmaster. Here Shannon was introduced to a co-educational system; that Shannon was a supporter of education for women may be seen in his efforts to establish Christian College in Columbia years later. Changing religious affiliations,

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<sup>68</sup> Walter Scott, "Visit to Kentucky," The Evangelist 8 (1840): 219.

<sup>69</sup> Fulton Telegraph, 19 July 1850, as reported in The Missouri Statesman (Columbia, MO) 2 Aug. 1850: 3.

<sup>70</sup> "President Shannon's Lectures," St. Louis Times, 1 Jan. 1852, as reported in The Missouri Statesman 9 Jan. 1852: 2.

<sup>71</sup> J. E. Hawley, letter to his wife, 10 June 1853, Joint Collection U of MO Western Historical Manuscript Collection--Columbia and State Historical Society of MO Manuscripts.

Shannon left Presbyterianism for the Baptist faith and preached along the southeastern seaboard. Called to pastor the Augusta Baptist Church, Shannon likewise taught in Richmond Academy. The first Baptist to teach at the University of Georgia in Athens, Shannon was instrumental in organizing the Athens Baptist Church. In accepting the presidency of the College of Louisiana, Shannon advanced his career and standing among Churches of Christ. The transition, however, was marred by religious controversy and the death of his first wife. The Bacon College years were marked by financial struggle, a growing family, and increased involvement in political affairs. The Missouri years could be characterized as challenging in two respects: 1) Shannon met constant criticism as president at Columbia, and 2) Shannon eagerly accepted leadership roles in the formation of Christian College and Christian University at Canton. His enthusiasm and zeal prompted him to speak from the heart in a forceful and animated way. Perhaps the reflections of Samuel Hatch, a fellow educator and friend, on the occasion of Shannon's death best describe the man:

Very few persons are qualified to do justice to Bro. Shannon's character.

Like most great men, devoted to the accomplishment of great public enterprises, he made few personal friends. Those who knew him only as a public man, were too apt to attribute his violence of manner and language in his public exhibitions to violence of temper, and he made enemies, not because he wronged any man, but because he would make no compromise with error, and, without hypocrisy or disguise, call men and things by their true names. His faults, if I may so express it, were the overflowings of his virtues. His temperament was too ardent, and sometimes, doubtless, defeated the wisest and best matured efforts.<sup>72</sup>

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72 "President James Shannon," Millennial Harbinger (1859): 295, Hatch quotation.

## **Intentions, Occasions, and Audiences**

### **CHAPTER 3**

To understand the pro-slavery, anti-abolitionist speeches that Shannon delivered, one must consider the exigences that gave rise to the addresses. On reconstructing the social setting of a speech, Thonssen, Baird, and Braden write:

It cannot be overemphasized that speeches are events occurring in highly complex situations, that responsibility of critical appraisal depends heavily upon the critic's ability to understand historical trends, the motivating forces, the immediate occasion, and most of all the composition and demands of the audience.<sup>1</sup>

Accordingly, three predominant themes undergird this chapter: intentions, occasions, and audiences. First, what were Shannon's intentions? What factors contributed to Shannon's emergence as an anti-abolitionist speaker? Second, what were the occasions and settings for the selected speeches? What was the political climate surrounding slavery? Third, in what ways were the audiences' knowledge, group identifications, and receptivity relevant to the speech events?

#### **Intentions**

A consideration of the "motivating forces" mentioned by Thonssen, Baird, and Braden leads one to consider what intentions and rhetorical aims Shannon espoused in each speech setting. That critics must sometimes hypothesize about speaker intention does not mean that intention is altogether a speculative and, thereby unobjective, incidental concern. Neither does it mean, as Edwin Black charges, that the critic is compelled to adopt the "rhetor's ends as adequate to an

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<sup>1</sup> Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 348.

assessment."<sup>2</sup> Granted that intention assigned by a critic to a speaker may result in biased criticism, as in the case of Goodnight's commentary on Reagan's speeches, refusal to speculate about intention(s) likewise fails to give justice to the communicative act.

It is my contention that three salient exigences served as precursors to the selected speeches: 1) the debate over slavery, 2) the need to raise funds, and 3) job and family security. Each exigence carried with it certain role expectations: Shannon as slavery proponent, fund-raiser, and family provider, respectively.

While the third role may not have been obvious to audiences, the interpersonal role may indeed be the primary exigence bearing on the speeches. During the Bacon College years, Shannon received sparse payment for his services, yet financial obligations mounted as his family grew by five and his number of slaves increased.<sup>3</sup> Admittedly, Shannon built a spacious home during the early years of his administration, but "Aspen Hall," as it was called, owed its existence more to Frances Shannon's inheritance from her father's estate than it did to Shannon's salary.<sup>4</sup> With the school precariously funded, Shannon's personal finances were also sorely affected. If Shannon failed as fund-raiser, he likewise failed as family provider; obviously the two roles became intertwined.

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<sup>2</sup> Edwin Black, Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1978) 78 and passim. Black criticizes neo-Aristotelian criticism for its speaker emphasis and subsequent failure to appraise the speaker's rhetorical policies or choices.

<sup>3</sup> Shannon had two sons who died in infancy (dates unknown) and two daughters by his first wife, born in 1829 and 1835. Children by his second wife were born as follows: boy 1839, girl 1841, boy 1843, girl 1845, girl 1847, boy 1849, two orphaned daughters of Joseph Shannon 1851, girl 1851, boy 1853, two sons of John Shannon resided with the Shannon's in order to complete their education 1855, boy 1856, and boy 1858. Total children: 6 girls, 8 boys, 4 dependents.

<sup>4</sup> Charlotte Thomas Marshall, "The Adventurous Life of James Shannon, Our First Pastor," Speech, First Baptist Church, Athens, GA, 30 Nov. 1988: 11. A debt of gratitude is owed Mrs. Marshall who has tirelessly researched the Georgia years of Shannon's life. In her opinion, "the property coming to him through both marriages enabled him to enjoy comforts and luxuries that his salary as an educator could never have afforded."

In like manner, the 1855 anti-abolitionist speech in Missouri occurred when Shannon's continued career as president of the University of Columbia was in question. Actually Shannon gave a version of this speech at several scheduled meetings.<sup>5</sup> Whether he ever contemplated a political career is uncertain. His stated intention in traveling about southwest Missouri was to "enlighten" the public of the danger of anti-slavery fanaticism. Shannon stated:

I have long believed that God had raised up these United States as his own chosen instrumentality for the regeneration of the world, and I regard the preservation of the Union as indispensable to the accomplishment . . . I am fully convinced that no created power can save the Union five years, unless the swelling tide of anti-slavery fanaticism be beaten back.<sup>6</sup>

Perhaps he additionally hoped to solidify board support for another term, since many of them held similar views on slavery. He may also have hoped to impress wealthy slave owners in anticipation of a career move to Christian University, a private school where contributions were needed. Having spoken at Christian University's ground-breaking ceremonies in 1853, Shannon undoubtedly had an interest in the outcome of the church-related school and realized that the support of southern Christians was indispensable. These conjectures are supported by a letter, accompanied by several copies of the speech, written to the Honorable Henry A. Wise of Virginia in 1856. In the letter, Shannon referred to efforts to remove him as president of the University of Missouri and added: "This they may do, but my tongue, or pen, in defense of Southern rights, it is

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<sup>5</sup> James Shannon, "A Card," 9 July 1855. Sent to pro-slavery and free-soil papers alike, the public notice gave Shannon's itinerary. Shannon planned to deliver his pro-slavery address at Warrensburg July 16th, Clinton 17th, Osceola 18th, Bolivar 19th, Springfield 23rd, Mount Vernon 25th, Neosho 26th, Carthage 28th, Greenfield 30th, Fremont 31st, Papinsville Aug. 1st, Harrisonville Aug. 3rd, and Independence 6th. Newspaper reports indicated that Shannon also spoke in St. Joseph Aug. 12th and Savannah Aug. 30th: The Missouri Statesman 10 Aug. 1855: 3; 31 Aug. 1855: 4.

<sup>6</sup> James Shannon, "A Card."

not in the power of man to stop."<sup>7</sup> Later that year Shannon accepted the presidency of the newly established Christian University and in 1857 toured the South on behalf of the school.

By suggesting that Shannon had multiple motives in delivering the two speeches is not to minimize his genuine belief in the Constitutional and biblical approval of slavery. Pinpointing when Shannon arrived at these conclusions is difficult. By Shannon's own admission, in the preface to the first address, he had once "intensely opposed slavery."<sup>8</sup> Most likely his years in the South had altered his perception of slavery ills. That he twice married women of means who were accompanied by "servants" gave him first-hand knowledge of what it meant to be a slaveowner. Exactly how many slaves Shannon ultimately owned is uncertain. His first wife Evelina remarked that people marvelled at the number of servants they owned.<sup>9</sup> In an attempt to persuade Bacon College officials to pay for moving expenses and to expect him later in the fall, Shannon claimed that to assume his duties earlier would result in loss of payment from both his present employer and loss of income gained from hiring out his four male slaves.<sup>10</sup> The East Feliciana Census Report of 1840 listed Shannon as owning five slaves.<sup>11</sup> Upon the death of his father-in-law Alsa Moore in 1843, Shannon inherited six slaves and other property.<sup>12</sup> Cornelia Shannon White, youngest

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<sup>7</sup> James Shannon, letter to Henry A. Wise, 7 Jan. 1856, Shannon Collection, Joint Collection U of MO Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia and State Historical Society of Missouri Manuscripts.

<sup>8</sup> James Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery, As Identified with the Philosophy of Human Happiness. An Essay" (Frankfort, KY: A. G. Hodges & Co., 1849) 2.

<sup>9</sup> Evelina Shannon, letter to Frances Cary Moore, 18 Feb. 1836.

<sup>10</sup> James Shannon, letter to James Taylor, 17 March 1840. "I have two boys which hire [sic] the present year for twenty dollars each month. Besides these, I have two men, that would hire readily for thirty dollars per month."

<sup>11</sup> Claude B. Slaton, compiler, "The 1840 Census of East and West Feliciana Parishes, Louisiana," 1986.

<sup>12</sup> Charlotte Thomas Marshall, "The Adventurous Life" 10.

daughter of James Shannon, spoke of a large number of slaves that belonged to the family during the Missouri years: one female slave, for instance had thirteen children.<sup>13</sup> According to Cornelia,

Our parents believed absolutely in Slavery and as firmly  
in not separating families by selling one of their members,  
and so slaves increased in numbers as well as in love and loyalty  
to every member of the white family who were taught to love and  
respect them.<sup>14</sup>

Privileges extended the servants on Sunday included a sermon delivered by Shannon and the afternoon free of work.<sup>15</sup>

### Occasion and Audience of the Kentucky Speech

Shannon delivered his "Philosophy of Slavery as Identified with the Philosophy of Human Happiness" to the Franklin Society of Bacon College on 27 June 1844. Little is known of the Franklin Society except that it was a literary organization.<sup>16</sup> According to the preface to the printed address, Shannon had been asked to speak on the topic by the society.<sup>17</sup> It is not surprising that the issue of slavery ranked foremost in the thoughts of students and faculty since two major denominations, i.e. the Methodists and Baptists, had already experienced divisions over the issue by 1844.

On the other hand, while members of the Churches of Christ owned more slaves per member than any other religious order, discussion of the issue rarely occurred in the journals,

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<sup>13</sup> Cornelia Shannon White, Diary, ts. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Cornelia Shannon White, Diary, ts. 1.

<sup>15</sup> Cornelia Shannon White, Diary, ts. 18.

<sup>16</sup> Dwight E. Stevenson, The Bacon College Story: 1836-1865 (Lexington, KY: The College of the Bible, 1962) 20.

<sup>17</sup> James Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery..." 3.

particularly after 1845.<sup>18</sup> As the Congress of the United States refused to receive anti-abolitionist petitions for the sake of conducting business, leaders in the Churches of Christ sought to promote religious unity by refusing to discuss the issue or by assigning it to the realm of opinion: it was evidently hoped that the fellowship might be spared the division that had split the Methodists and Baptists. Shannon's ownership of slaves and views on slavery, then, were not radical to the fellowship, but his adamant airing of those views was.

In 1849, events appeared favorable for a republication of the address. The occasion was the Kentucky Constitutional Convention of 1849. Although not a delegate, Shannon capitalized on the public interest and republished his address with additions, perhaps research gathered from debating the issue with John C. Young, president of nearby Centre College.<sup>19</sup>

In February of that year a reluctant legislature issued the call for a constitutional convention to be held in Frankfort on October 1st and set the election of delegates to be held in August.<sup>20</sup> Supporters of gradual emancipation and abolition saw an opportunity to insert provisions which might eventually eradicate slaveholding in the commonwealth. Senator Henry Clay, for instance, proposed in a widely circulated letter that all slaves born after a certain date

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<sup>18</sup> David Edwin Harrell, Jr., Quest for a Christian America: The Disciples of Christ and American Society to 1866 (Nashville: The Disciples of Christ Historical Society, 1966): chapters 4 and 5. Harrell concluded that the slavery issue had become too volatile to discuss for editor, Barton W. Stone (p. 99). In 1845 Alexander Campbell set forth his view of slavery as an expedient political issue and not a religious one; following the articles, Campbell refused to allow a general discussion of the subject and engaged in what Harrell called "a policy of studied suppression" (p. 109). Moderates in both regions of the country tended to agree that silence was the best course of action (p. 129). Two exceptions should be noted: first, coverage of the Compromise of 1850 and comments on the beginning of North-Western Christian University in 1850, second, the Bethany student rebellion of 1856. Not until 1854, with the establishment of the North-Western Christian Magazine, did the abolitionists in the church have an unsuppressed voice (p. 114).

<sup>19</sup> Harrell 122. The exact date of the debate is not known.

<sup>20</sup> Asa Earl Martin, The Anti-Slavery Movement in Kentucky Prior to 1850 (Louisville: The Standard Printing Co., 1918) 98-138.



be freed when they reached age twenty-five.<sup>21</sup> Freed slaves would work for the state until sufficient funds could be earned to transport them to Africa through the colonization program. In April one hundred fifty supporters of emancipation from twenty-four counties assembled to discuss a common strategy; included among the supporters were Senator Clay, Cassius M. Clay, Robert J. Breckinridge, and John G. Fee. However, the conference ended with no one measure of emancipation supported.<sup>22</sup>

During the summer, numerous speeches and debates occurred between pro-slavery and anti-slavery candidates for the constitutional convention: many of these events ended in violence.<sup>23</sup> To list a few, a three day debate took place in Danville; at a pro-slavery meeting in Trimble County a resolution passed calling upon Henry Clay to resign; in Paducah, Judge James Campbell shot and killed his opponent the Honorable Benedict Austin. At a political gathering in Madison County, Cassius M. Clay killed a man in self-defense and was severely injured himself. None of these events escaped the media's attention, including both North and South presses.<sup>24</sup> Despite polling thousand of votes, not one emancipation candidate was elected, and emancipation efforts dramatically died. In fact, the delegation revised the Bill of Rights in such a way to further entrench the institution of slavery.<sup>25</sup>

That Shannon published the address indicated that he had a wider audience in mind beyond the Franklin Society. Both publications came at pivotal points in Shannon's career at Bacon

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<sup>21</sup> Ivan E. McDougale, Slavery in Kentucky 1792-1865 (1918; Lancaster, PA: New Era Printing Co., 1970).

<sup>22</sup> Lowell H. Harrison, The Antislavery Movement in Kentucky (Lexington: U of KY P, 1978) 57-60.

<sup>23</sup> J. Winston Coleman, Jr., Slavery Times in Kentucky (Chapel Hill: U of NC P, 1940) 312-317.

<sup>24</sup> Wesley Norton, "Reaction in the Religious Press to the Campaign for Delegates to the Kentucky Constitutional Convention in 1849," Register of Kentucky Historical Society 60 (1962): 143-152.

<sup>25</sup> McDougale 115.

College: 1844 and 1849 were both years in which Shannon contemplated employment elsewhere. I suspect that the address was designed more for southern, aristocratic readers, possibly church members<sup>26</sup>, than they were for border state auditors. Southern readers might be so delighted by the tract that they would: 1) contribute to Bacon College, 2) enroll their children, or 3) offer Shannon a position. This conclusion is based on an extensive list of southern gentry to whom the speech was mailed.<sup>27</sup> Even if Bacon College folded, attention given the speech would enable Shannon to impress sufficiently those of influence who could help him "land on his feet" once more.

Interestingly, Alexander Campbell editorialized on the efforts of the Kentucky Constitutional Convention and sided with the emancipationists.<sup>28</sup> Campbell, however, soon found himself depending more and more on southern aid for Bethany College and never ostensibly offended again.<sup>29</sup>

### Occasion and Audience of the Missouri Speech

In July 1855 a pro-slavery convention met in Lexington, Missouri, near the Missouri-Kansas border to test the political strength of pro-slavery forces. For months prior to the convention, Missourians witnessed growing pro-slavery activity expressing intolerance of the anti-slavery agitation. These partisan demonstrations became both more frequent and intense largely because of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. This Congressional act allowed popular sovereignty to decide whether Kansas or Nebraska should enter the Union as free or slave states.

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<sup>26</sup> Churches of Christ were strongest in the slave states, and consequently many disciples owned slaves.

<sup>27</sup> James Shannon, "Names to which the Philosophy of Slavery is to be sent," n. d. The 1844 list was comprised of the following categories: educators, 13; editors, 6; physicians, 5; politicians, 12; ministers, 5; bankers, 1; military leaders, 6; judges, 6; private citizens, 19. In all, 11 states and the District of Columbia were represented: the majority of the addressees resided in Georgia.

<sup>28</sup> Alexander Campbell, "A Tract for the People of Kentucky," Millennial Harbinger, (May, 1849): 247.

<sup>29</sup> Harrell 121.

Because of their proximity to Kansas, their fear of an emerging Negro haven for run-aways, and their resolve to maintain a powerful voice in Congress, many pro-slavery Missourians felt compelled to cross the border and try to influence the decision. Emotions intensified when word spread that the Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Society planned to buy land and sell it for the stated purpose of making Kansas a free state!<sup>30</sup>

James Shannon was one such Missourian who felt compelled to speak his convictions. Never afraid of controversy, and perhaps thriving on it, Shannon decided to embark on a summer tour to speak on the very subject of slavery. Regrettably, objective reports of this tour, and even Shannon's tenure at Columbia, are lacking since the newspaper reporting of the day expressed the political opinions of the given editor. The newspaper accounts that do exist come from "freesoil papers" whose jaundiced judgments must be rendered as such.<sup>31</sup>

Splintered politics characterized Missouri during the 1850s. Senator Thomas Hart Benton's opposition to the annexation of Texas and the Missouri Compromise divided the Democratic Party into Benton and anti-Benton forces; although Democrats outnumbered the Whigs in the legislature, Benton lost his seat in 1850 and failed to regain it in an 1854 attempt. The "in-house fighting" that accompanies such divisions did not evade the halls of education. With the turn of political events, the anti-Benton Democrats seized control of the university board of curators from the Whigs and ousted John H. Lanthrop, president of the university. Five of the ten

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<sup>30</sup> Perry McCandless, A History of Missouri: 1820-1860 (Columbia, MO: U of MO P, 1972) 271. Founded in 1854 by Eli Thayer, the society later became the New England Aid Company. In 1854 it settled about 500 persons and in 1855, about 1,250.

<sup>31</sup> Jonas Viles, The University of Missouri: A Centennial History 1839-1939 (Columbia: E. W. Stephens Co., 1939): 60. Viles relied on such reporting and concluded: "Shannon emerges from the story as a man by personality and temperament quite unfit for the presidency of a state university. Historically the importance of his stormy regime is the extremely injurious effect on the University itself. No wonder the institution did not prosper and develop; one almost wonders that it survived." Data shows that the school did prosper under Shannon's leadership.

curators belonged to the Church of Christ and most had pro-slavery views.<sup>32</sup> Their selection of Shannon as successor led to complaints that the "Campbellites" were taking over the school.<sup>33</sup>

William F. Switzler, editor of The Missouri Statesman and supporter of Benton, would eventually target Shannon as the object of his frustration over the political upheaval. Switzler, who had been a close friend of former President Lanthrop and who had free access to college information before, now had to proceed through official channels; this minor incident might have been overlooked, except he was also denied printing rights to Shannon's inaugural speech and to university catalog printings. These printing rights were given to the newly established Sentinel, a paper associated with anti-Benton views.<sup>34</sup> In turn, Switzler scandalized Shannon at every opportunity. Benton, himself, accused Shannon of being a part of a conspiracy to ruin him politically.<sup>35</sup> Had Shannon overlooked these petty incidents, rather than responding at every juncture, his tenure at Columbia might have been more pleasant, if not longer. While interesting, these incidents have been extensively reported elsewhere and belabor the conclusion that Shannon had fierce opposition.<sup>36</sup>

Criticism mounted in 1855 when Shannon embarked on a pro-slavery tour of the state. Thomas M. Allen, a leading preacher in the Churches of Christ, wrote to a friend that Shannon

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<sup>32</sup> Allean Lemmon Hale, Petticoat Pioneer: The Christian College Story 1851-1951 (Columbia: Christian College, 1951) 8-9.

<sup>33</sup> "President Shannon's Defense Against Col. Bradford's Attack," The Missouri Statesman 11 July 1851: 2.

<sup>34</sup> Jonas Viles 54-55. Whether these were Shannon's actions or the board's actions is unclear and perhaps would have been irrelevant to Switzler. Frank F. Stephens indicates that the board, and not Shannon, had banned Switzler from meetings. Frank F. Stephens, A History of the University of Missouri (Columbia: U of MO Press, 1962): 77-78.

<sup>35</sup> The Missouri Statesman 25 June 1852.

<sup>36</sup> David E. Herrell, Jr., "James Shannon: Preacher, Educator, and Fire-Eater," Missouri Historical Review 63 (1969): 135-170; George R. Lee, "James Shannon's Search for Happiness," Missouri Historical Review 73 (1978): 71-84.

spent the summer vacation "chin deep in politics."<sup>37</sup> Shannon commenced a tour to "enlighten" the public on the slavery issue while enroute to and from a Pro-slavery Convention to be held in Lexington. The tour began the 30th of June in Columbia with a speech given at the fair grounds.<sup>38</sup> Shannon delivered similar, if not the same, speeches in at least sixteen other places.<sup>39</sup> The highlight of the tour, though, must be considered as occurring 13 July 1855 when Shannon addressed the Pro-slavery Convention.

The convention purported to protect the interests of eighteen western counties, adjacent or close to Kansas, in which over half the slave population of Missouri resided.<sup>40</sup> Specifically, the convention called for discussion of the slavery issue and consideration of ways in which property rights of slaveowners might be further protected: it was hoped that a political agenda would emerge and that legislators would give heed.

Two hundred five official delegates from twenty-six counties attended the meeting held from July 12th to the 14th.<sup>41</sup> Former Governors Austin A. King and Meredith M. Marmaduke were among the delegates. The first session, on the 12th, found the delegates engaged in forming a resolutions committee and electing appropriate officers. Although both moderate and radical supporters of slavery were present, pro-slavery radicals were elected as officers. During the morning session of the 13th, delegates heard and revised resolutions that considered economic boycotts against states refusing to enforce the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. Resolutions protesting

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<sup>37</sup> T. M. Allen to J. A. Gano, 10 August 1855, John Allen Gano Papers, Joint Collection U of MO Western Historical Manuscript Collection-Columbia and State Historical Society of Missouri Manuscripts.

<sup>38</sup> The Missouri Statesman 6 July 1855: 3; 13 July 1855: 2.

<sup>39</sup> See previous footnote #5.

<sup>40</sup> "Address to the People of the United States, together with the Proceedings and Resolutions of the Pro-Slavery Convention of Missouri, Held at Lexington, July, 1855" (Republican Office: St. Louis, 1855): 3.

<sup>41</sup> Barbara Layenette Green, "The Slavery Debate in Missouri, 1831-1855," diss., U of MO-Columbia, 1980, 155.

abolitionist intrusion into Kansas and protecting states' rights to regulate slavery, once submitted, were adopted as the platform of the convention. In forboding language, the resolution warned that any attempt to restrict slavery or usurp state regulation of slavery would result in "dissolution of the union."<sup>42</sup> Interestingly, the motion to ask Shannon to address the convention was challenged by one-fourth of the counties.<sup>43</sup> That afternoon, the convention passed a resolution asking state legislatures to forbid the circulation of abolitionist periodicals. After a fifteen minute recess, the group reassembled to hear Shannon speak on the subject of "Domestic Slavery." The speech lasted two hours and fifteen minutes. Following dinner, during the evening session, the convention thanked Shannon for his remarks and ordered his address to be published.<sup>44</sup> The final day of the convention resulted in the formation of two committees: one to draw up and publish a history of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the other to supervise the publication of Shannon's message. Agreeing that ten thousand copies of the documents be printed and distributed throughout the state, the convention adjourned.

Had Shannon flagrantly abused his position as president of the state university? His political enemies thought so and managed to pass legislation that led to his resignation the next year. Within a month, however, he had been named the first president of Christian University in Canton, Missouri, and embarked on a southern tour to raise funds among friends, who perhaps constituted his intended audience in the first place.

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<sup>42</sup> "Address to the People of the United States..." 22.

<sup>43</sup> "Address to the People of the United States..." 21. Dr. Lowry of Howard County presented the motion to hear Shannon. A motion to table Lowry's motion was defeated by a vote of 16-7: each county receiving a vote.

<sup>44</sup> "Address to the People of the United States..." 28. The resolution passed, but 7 counties voted against publication.

### Summary

Although once opposed to slavery, Shannon changed his views after his experience in the South. Owning numerous slaves, Shannon, evidently, treated them with kindness and taught his children to do likewise.

As president of Bacon College, he delivered a lecture in 1844 on "Slavery as Identified with Human Happiness" to the Franklin Society. Unrepresentative of leaders in the Churches of Christ, Shannon boldly defended slavery and lashed out at abolitionists. In 1849, the address was reprinted during the emancipation debate of the Kentucky Constitutional Convention. At both times, Shannon printed the address when the school's existence and his personal livelihood appeared threatened: circumstances leading this researcher to speculate that the immediate audience consisted of students, the wider audience of readers, and an intended audience of possible donors, with southern leanings.

Shannon's tenure at the University of Missouri at Columbia was riddled with controversy. Much of the controversy lay with the circumstances concerning the former president's removal and the aftermath of bitter politics brought by the division of the Democratic Party into Benton and anti-Benton forces. In 1855 Shannon embarked on the lecture circuit and delivered at least sixteen pro-slavery speeches. At a pro-slavery meeting in Lexington, Missouri, Shannon delivered a two hour and fifteen minute speech on "Domestic Slavery" that was later published; however, not all delegates approved Shannon's appearance as speaker or the printing of the speech. The following year, legislative measures pressured Shannon to resign. Quickly accepting the post as president of Christian University, Shannon embarked on a southern fund-raising trip. Certainly, Shannon must have been aware of the volatile nature of his remarks. Given at a pro-slavery rally, the speech likely served as a rallying cry to men frustrated over the future of Kansas. That the embattled educator conducted such a vigorous campaign for slavery might, at first glance, be regarded as a political miscalculation since it alienated Shannon's enemies. Viewed differently, delegates emerged as the immediate audience, readers a wider, but highly polarized audience, and southerners willing to support Shannon elsewhere a possible intended audience.

## **Organization and Invention in the Selected Speeches**

### **CHAPTER 4**

As literary artifacts, the texts of the selected speeches provided the corpus of evidence for this dissertation. Granted that the texts received literary polishing, their content constituted Shannon's rhetorical response to the exigences at hand. Used as propaganda to "enlighten" the masses, to promote struggling schools, and to advance Shannon's personal standing, the printed version of the speeches, if different from the oral presentations, may be regarded as the more important rhetorical response. Assuming that Shannon attempted to meet all three objectives, chapter four considers whether organization and invention significantly aided the achievement of role duality. For convenience, the speeches will be referred to as the "Kentucky" and "Missouri" speeches, respectively.

#### **The Kentucky Speech**

##### **Organization**

The earliest rhetorical handbooks emphasized organizational skills, particularly the need for an introduction, body, and conclusion. Contemporary research in speech communication has revealed that structured messages using familiar patterns of organization are generally more favorably received by audiences. Whether audiences are significantly influenced by organization or not, rhetorical critics must, in my judgment, understand the relation of arguments to each other.

Public speakers are generally taught that an introduction should perform the following functions: introduce the topic, gain the interest and good will of the audience, and preview major ideas. Since the printed version contained a preface, it, too, for purposes of the study will be counted as part of the introduction. The preface served as a vehicle to gain the good will of the audience and to establish credibility. In it, Shannon confessed that he once had intensely opposed domestic slavery, but had been convinced otherwise through a "prayerful and protracted



examination of the Bible...on the subject."<sup>1</sup> This appeal to the holy scriptures suggested that authority for later arguments came not from Shannon, but from God. Acknowledging that the essay might never have been written had emancipationists been less audacious, Shannon also noted that many citizens had solicited the essay: that others so desired the speech suggested that it was a reputable work. With a humble expression of gratitude, Shannon thanked the young gentlemen of the Franklin Society, stated his topic, and commenced his discourse without benefit of preview.

Organizing the body of the speech into four major sections, Shannon concentrated on the procurement of happiness and its necessary relation to bondage. The larger framework may be viewed as supporting the theme that elusive happiness can only be gained by adherence to God's laws, which necessarily restrict and bind. His four major ideas were:

- I. All humans desire happiness, but few people find it.
  - A. Misery results when laws are disobeyed.
  - B. Ignorance and insubordination are barriers to happiness.
  - C. Freedom leads to happiness only if one chooses to abide by laws.
  - D. Destruction of selfwill and cultivation of a law-abiding spirit are needed to find happiness.
- II. God benevolently instituted various grades of bondage for human happiness.
  - A. Women, men, and children are under bondage.
  - B. Slaves are under bondage to masters.
  - C. Bondage is divinely sanctioned.
- III. Abolitionists disregard God's laws for happiness.
  - A. Abolitionists are guilty of thievery and coveting.
  - B. Abolitionists distort or misunderstand the scriptures.

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<sup>1</sup> James Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery as Identified with the Philosophy of Human Happiness" (Frankfort, KY: A. G. Hodges & Co., 1849) 2. See Appendix B.

IV. Governments restrict liberties in order to secure the common good.

- A. Governments derive authority from God.
- B. Communities may choose their own form of government.
- C. Freedom is related to virtue and intelligence.

Although advancing four major arguments, Shannon focused attention on ideas III and IV. Evidently his desire to provide a philosophical underpinning to the slavery discussion proceeded without regard for the notion of balance. To aid the flow of thought in the philosophical section (section I), he used transitional phrases such as "if these principles be true" and signpost words such as "hence" and "now." Furthermore, he also included internal summaries (end of sections I-III)<sup>2</sup> to enhance the cohesion of the ideas. Occasionally the structure of Shannon's remarks seemed disjointed. For instance, Shannon included a paragraph on the selling of children into slavery that was prematurely introduced and appeared almost as an aside: "There is another point, which it is important to notice before leaving this part of our subject....More of this, however, in another place."<sup>3</sup> The paragraph had the potential of bridging the previous thoughts with the section on domestic slavery, but Shannon chose to end the section and begin the discussion of domestic slavery with a bold lettered heading.

Shannon concluded the speech with an extensive summary of the four major ideas. Having done so, he further discussed the political structure of the United States, the provisions of liberty guaranteed in the Constitution, and how those liberties were being jeopardized by abolitionists who had no regard for the document. Referring twice to the "young gentlemen" of the Franklin Society, he exhorted them to enjoy liberty by practicing virtue.

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<sup>2</sup> Shannon, "Philosophy" 5, 7, 18, 21, 24.

<sup>3</sup> Shannon, "Philosophy" 8.

## Invention

In chapter one, performatives were viewed in an unrestricted sense, i.e., as effects in audience attitude and action prompted by a message. Further research in the area of argumentation has revealed that other speech act theorists hold similar views. For instance, Frans H. van Eemeren and Rob Grootendorst described the process of argumentation in the following way:

If the communication and interaction go reasonably well, the illocutionary effect of *understanding* [their italics] will in principle be a *necessary* condition for bringing about the inherent perlocutionary effect of *acceptance* and consecutive perlocutionary consequences.<sup>4</sup>

According to these theorists, acceptance or non-acceptance constituted the "minimal" perlocutionary effect; consecutive effects brought about by the message were termed "optimal" effects.

One productive way to understand Shannon's messages and their minimal perlocutionary effects is to cast his major arguments into syllogistic form. In order to view the bare logic of the arguments and to evaluate their validity, truthfulness, and possible effect on audiences, I have relied on general rules of argumentation set forth in Thonssen, Baird, and Braden's text.<sup>5</sup> Since speakers seldom complete syllogisms in their speeches, but use enthymemes which omit or assume at least one premise, liberties, alteration of argument wording, have occasionally been taken with the text so that arguments may be explicitly stated in syllogistic form. To analyze Shannon's logical proofs in syllogistic fashion is not to suggest that his immediate, wider, or intended audience evaluated his remarks on such a basis. However, to those who did consider Shannon's remarks critically, the arguments may be said to be the heart of the message.

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<sup>4</sup> Frans H. van Eemeren and Rob Grootendorst, Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions: A Theoretical Model for the Analysis of Discussions Directed towards Solving Conflicts of Opinion (Dordrecht, Holland: Foris Publications, 1984): 25.

<sup>5</sup> Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 408-410.

Developing the same thoughts in a different way, John T. Cacioppo and Richard E. Petty have written extensively on the cognitive processing of persuasive cues. According to the authors, persuasion proceeds along two avenues, what they term "central" and "peripheral" routes. When an individual's elaboration likelihood (degree of involvement with the message) is high, arguments are weighed, and persuasion may be said to have taken the central route. On the other hand when an individual's elaboration likelihood is low, variables other than arguments, e.g. peripheral cues such as credibility, emotional appeals, and delivery, may take precedence over logic. The chief advantage of the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) to communication theorists is its ability to synthesize other explanations of persuasion along the central and peripheral routes: the key variable being the auditor's likelihood to evaluate and scrutinize.<sup>6</sup> That Shannon's audiences may have evaluated the message differently is further discussed in the final chapter's assessment of consecutive perlocutionary effects.

### First Major Argument

Shannon's first major argument, and the foundation for his message, may be cast as a categorical syllogism:

**Major premise:** God's laws are just, natural, and lead to happiness.

**Minor premise:** Bondage is one of God's laws.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, bondage is just, natural, and leads to happiness.

Logically valid because the middle term ("God's laws") was distributed, the syllogism met technical requirements of formal logic. While both premises needed some proof, it seems probable that the majority of Shannon's audience, even abolitionists, accepted the major premise. One would expect that Shannon as a preacher and president of a religious school would uphold the

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<sup>6</sup> From this framework one can regard consistency theory, the work of the Yale school, and the work of theorists Ajzen and Fishbein as explanations of the central route to persuasion. Narrative theory and the theories advanced by Bem and the Sherifs could be classified as peripheral explanations.

veracity of the Bible. Obviously, by associating the Bible with happiness, with a desire held by all humans, Shannon was in a better position to argue that biblical references to slavery must be a part of the equation for happiness.

The minor premise needed far greater proof than mere assertion. To Shannon all bondage had its beginning with the Adamic fall. Consequently, he attempted to demonstrate through specific examples that God benevolently instituted slavery for the benefit and happiness of humans. In elaborate detail and reference to scriptures, Shannon argued that husband-wife, parent-child, master-slave, and government-citizen relationships constituted various grades of bondage:

Women are in bondage to men.

Men are in bondage to nature.

Children are in bondage to parents.

Domestic slaves are in bondage to masters.

Citizens are in political bondage to government.

Shannon further maintained that since biblical instructions were given each relationship, God had obviously instituted slavery as a natural relationship which would lead to happiness. If these laws were not carried out, only unhappiness could result.

Thonssen, Baird, and Braden point out that "arguments require scrutiny that goes beyond the determination of validity."<sup>7</sup> Indeed, critics must also give consideration to the quality and quantity of evidence provided as well as to the acceptability of the claims that constitute the premises. That Shannon relied extensively on biblical authority to substantiate his claims cannot be disputed. However, it can be argued that Shannon's examples of bondage differed to such a degree to make the argument unacceptable. One might divorce a mate, leave parents, and desert native land, but the bondage of slavery suggested no such termination, save death. Hence, the inconsistent use of terms may have rendered the argument unacceptable to those who highly elaborated (those who gave careful attention to argument and evidence). Another reason for those

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<sup>7</sup> Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 416.

who followed the central route of persuasion to reject the argument would be Shannon's failure to demonstrate the "benevolent" nature of bondage: i.e. exactly how bondage contributed to happiness. Consequently, the vagueness associated with how bondage cured the soul that sinned may have rendered the argument unacceptable.

Another objection that could be raised centers on the concept of law. When speaking of legislation in the Bible, what Shannon referred to as the "only infallible standard of Moral Truth and Human Duty," he never hinted that laws given to the Israelites and Christians simply reflected the political structures of the day; instead he interpreted biblical references to slavery as a mandate for a system of slavery. This failure to distinguish between laws of God and laws of man led Shannon to regard all who practiced civil disobedience as blasphemers: since God had ordained government, all citizens were bound to obey these laws. Ample New Testament scriptures support the conclusion that higher moral laws must be obeyed when conflict exists between the state and religion, but Shannon considered none of these scriptural references. Furthermore, Shannon never entertained the possibility that laws might be changed for the better or that laws might be inadequate for the whole population: particularly those enslaved. The argument ignored that some laws perpetuate injustice instead of happiness. Those who highly elaborated the weight of Shannon's argument likely found it wanting in the balances. Hence, while palatable to his intended audience (wealthy southerners), the argument probably was less likely to be accepted by others.

### **Second Major Argument**

The second major argument used by Shannon can be recast into the following hypothetical syllogism:

**Major Premise:** If domestic slavery grew, it was because God positively decreed it to be good.

**Minor Premise:** God positively decreed slavery to be good.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, domestic slavery grew.

Because the minor premise affirms the consequent instead of the antecedent, the argument failed to meet technical guidelines for validity. Even if the syllogism were valid, the major premise would require substantial proof. Shannon seems to be suggesting that growth alone is valid proof of divine approval. Carried to its logical extreme, the argument posits that any institution or practice experiencing growth, e.g., disease, war, famine, etc., has met with God's approval.

Even so, the minor premise also demanded substantial proof to be regarded as credible. Shannon relied on specific incidents in Israel's history to show that slavery grew by God's permission. Specifically he emphasized that slavery was mentioned in the institution of the rite of circumcision, in Passover legislation, and in the law delivered by Moses at Mt. Sinai. Such observances of slavery led Shannon to conclude that the right to own slaves was sacredly guarded and that slavery grew by God's positive decree. Disagreement with the argument likely lay with the minor premise's assumption that slavery grew "by God's positive decree." The examples cited by Shannon obviously emphasized Israel's theological evolution, and in so doing made provisions for slaves who were a segment of the population. None of the examples could be interpreted as encouraging the spread of slavery. In fact, one might argue that Old Testament practices (e.g. regarding divorce) were permitted, though not intended. Hence, while slavery was permitted and legislation provided, one could hardly argue that it grew by positive decree from God. Listeners who highly elaborated Shannon's reasons likely viewed the argument with skepticism.

### **Third Major Argument**

To Shannon the question of owning slaves gave way to a higher consideration. The following categorical syllogism illustrated his displeasure with abolitionists:

**Major Premise:** All who oppose slavery oppose the teachings of God.

**Minor Premise:** Abolitionists oppose slavery.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, abolitionists oppose the teachings of God.

Logically constructed, the argument, nonetheless, depended on how well Shannon had proven that God positively decreed slavery to be good. Serious objections have already been presented that

make such a claim questionable. Associating abolitionists with those who oppose God, Shannon attempted to prove the major premise in a couple of ways. First, he argued that those who advocated emancipation without compensation to slaveowners were guilty of breaking the commandment against stealing. Anticipating the reply that abolitionists would not personally benefit from seeing slaves freed, Shannon argued if they were not guilty of stealing they were guilty of coveting! Second, he claimed that those who denounced slavery blasphemed God. Acknowledging that abolitionists used biblical passages in their arguments against slavery, Shannon contended they misinterpreted or twisted the scriptures to their own understanding. For instance, to denounce slavery on the basis of the golden rule ("do unto others...") ignored the fact that the Jews, who owned slaves and who received instruction about owning slaves, had been given a similar rule earlier. Those following the central route of persuasion might have wondered if alternative interpretations of scripture were necessarily indications of opposition to God. Similarly, those who elaborated Shannon's claims might have wondered whether this was a case in which higher ethical laws were called into question: viewed from this perspective, the minor premise failed to aid the argument. For these reasons, the argument probably should be viewed as unacceptable.

#### Fourth Major Argument

Shannon's last major argument took the form of a categorical syllogism:

**Major Premise:** All who oppose slavery oppose the United States  
government and Constitution.

**Minor Premise:** Abolitionists oppose slavery.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, abolitionists oppose the United States  
government and Constitution.

Logically valid because the middle term was distributed, the argument met technical standards of formal logic. The minor premise--that abolitionists opposed slavery--was unquestionably accepted; hence, Shannon needed to prove the major premise. Categorizing abolitionists as



rebellious, Shannon compared these "over-zealous admirers of freedom" to the anarchists of the French Revolution. In Shannon's estimation, by opposing laws which protected the rights of the slaveowners, abolitionists demonstrated a disregard for government and for God who ordained governments. Accordingly, he looked upon those (French anarchists, abolitionists, and others) with disgust who placed zeal above reason. Although Shannon also would employ emotional appeals, he regarded the whole of his treatise as logically based. The abolitionists were the enemy, and not the master. That not one anti-slavery candidate won election to the Constitutional Convention of Kentucky, in his opinion, gave testimony that the abolitionists were not yet trusted by the majority.

Quoting extensively from Francis Wayland's<sup>8</sup> book Elements of Moral Science, a common college text authored by a supporter of emancipation, Shannon agreed with Wayland's view that freedom was correlated with virtue. Differing from Wayland, Shannon maintained that the passions of vile people must be kept in check by subjecting force. The agitating cry of the abolitionists, in Shannon's view, endangered the stability of the country and ignored the social plight of freed negro slaves. Shannon also expressed a concern for the safety of the white race if all blacks were freed. While not actually commenting on the inferiority of blacks, Shannon implied that they lacked the necessary skills and virtue to appreciate freedom and follow the laws that would lead to happiness. Some audience members likely wondered if "sufficient" assurances would ever arise to convince the slave-owners?: others if the blacks were capable of advancing. On the other hand, abolitionists were seen as a threat to the peace of the Union by many. Consequently, this argument, while exaggerated, likely found considerable acceptance.

Arguing that God's laws proclaim bondage to be just, that domestic slavery grew because God positively decreed it to be good, that abolitionists oppose the teachings of God, and that abolitionists oppose the United States government and Constitution, Shannon relied extensively on

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<sup>8</sup> Fourth president of Brown University, Wayland served in that capacity for twenty-eight years. His Elements of Moral Science, printed in 1835, was used by many teachers, including Shannon.

biblical authority. Although pro-slavery members of Shannon's immediate, extended, and intended audience may have uncritically accepted the arguments, only the last argument, in the critic's estimation, was acceptable given the Constitution as it stood.

## The Missouri Speech

### Organization

Shannon introduced the Missouri address with an explanation of his motives. Attempting to secure the audience's good will, Shannon stated that his patriotism as an American citizen and his love for truth as a Christian compelled him to speak in defense of slavery until the abolitionists were silenced or converted. His purposes were clear:

I am free to confess, that I can conceive of no better means  
for the accomplishment of these sublime results than to  
cure or kill free-soil fanaticism. . . And I am unable even  
to imagine a better method for correcting this fanaticism,  
than to enlighten the public mind on the subject of slavery.<sup>9</sup>

To refute possible comments about preachers dabbling in politics, Shannon declared that a defense of slavery in a slave state such as Missouri could hardly be considered dabbling in politics; moreover, any serious examination of slavery would necessarily concern itself with moral and biblical questions. Although not previewing the major ideas, Shannon revealed his strategy to view slavery as fact, not speculative question. Those thoughts comprised a thesis that affirmed southern rights: **the economic, moral, natural, and Constitutional rights of slave owners are threatened by growing abolitionist sentiment.**

Viewing slavery as fact, Shannon discussed the following major ideas in the body of the speech in topical arrangement:

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<sup>9</sup> James Shannon, "Domestic Slavery" (St. Louis: Republican Book and Job Office, 1855): 5. See Appendix C.

- I. The South is economically tied to slave labor.
  - A. Slaves constitute invested property.
  - B. To abolish slavery would bring ruin to the South.
  - C. Slave states will not consent to abolishing slavery.
- II. Slavery is not morally wrong.
  - A. The Bible is an infallible standard of moral truth.
  - B. Slavery was and is sanctioned by God.
- III. Slavery does not violate natural rights.
  - A. The laws of nature are the laws of God.
  - B. The master/slave relationship is better than master/hireling.
  - C. To make slaves is a natural right of conquerors..
  - D. Slavery is a relation existing between moral agents and not soil.
- IV. Slavery is Constitutionally protected.
  - A. Government protects rights of property owners.
  - B. Governments may seize property but must compensate.
  - C. Kentucky emancipation efforts were defeated.
  - D. Congress does not possess power to prohibit slavery.
- V. Anti-slavery fanaticism must be stopped.
  - A. Friends of the South and of the Constitution should unite.
  - B. Abolitionists should be regarded as the enemy.
  - C. Delegates should endorse Dr. Lee's Resolutions.

In his first four arguments Shannon sought to provide a rationale for the call to action he presented in the last part of the speech: that rationale being based on economic, moral, natural, and political rights of the slaveowner. In the second major division Shannon drew heavily on material he had advanced in his earlier treatise on slavery in Kentucky: emphasizing biblical approval for slavery, Shannon devoted greater attention to this section than any other major section.

While Shannon used fewer internal summaries than in the Kentucky speech, this second speech, nevertheless, is easier to grasp. Transitional paragraphs separated major ideas. For instance, following section I: "To all this, however, it may be objected that slavery is a moral wrong..."<sup>10</sup> Other sections began with a posed question. For example, before section III began he stated: "But is not slavery opposed to natural rights, which are inalienable? I reply, that the laws of Nature are the laws of God."<sup>11</sup> In like manner, he began section IV with:

Has Congress, then, the power to exclude slavery from the territories? This question naturally resolves itself into two others, viz: What power can government, abstractly considered, rightfully exercise over property? and, 2d. What power, in this respect, has been specially given to Congress?<sup>12</sup>

The last argument, that anti-slavery fanaticism must be stopped, served also as his conclusion, since Shannon called upon his audiences to act to silence the voice of the abolitionists and to preserve the Union. In this call for action, he used intense and emotional language:

And if, as we have seen, right of property is sanctioned by the light of Nature, the Constitution of the United States, and the clear teaching of the Bible, a deliberate and persistent violation of that right, even by government, is as villainous as highway robbery; and, when peaceable modes of redress are exhausted, IS A JUST CAUSE OF WAR BETWEEN SEPARATE STATES, AND OF REVOLUTION IN THE SAME STATE.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> James Shannon, "Domestic Slavery" 9.

<sup>11</sup> James Shannon, "Domestic Slavery" 15.

<sup>12</sup> James Shannon, "Domestic Slavery" 19.

<sup>13</sup> James Shannon, "Domestic Slavery" 24.

[capitalization, his]

Urging friends of the South and of the Constitution to act in concert, Shannon concluded the speech by exhorting his immediate audience to exhaust all peaceable means to protect their rights and preserve the Union.

## **Invention**

### **First Major Argument**

To better understand Shannon's first major argument in the Missouri speech, it can be recast as a hypothetical syllogism. Logically valid because the minor premise affirmed the antecedent, the syllogism met rules for acceptance.

**Major Premise:** If the South is economically dependent on slave labor, then southerners will not consent to the abolition of slavery.

**Minor Premise:** The South is economically dependent on slave labor.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, southerners will not consent to the abolition of slavery.

While both premises demanded proof, the minor premise needed greater substantiation. Indeed, to conjecture on whether or not southerners would consent to the abolition of slavery depended on how convincingly it could be shown that the South was economically tied to the peculiar institution. As Shannon proceeded to describe the South's dependence on slavery, the argument took an ironic turn. Shannon contended that "old England and New England" forced a slave economy on the South, and now, again for selfish reasons, this same alliance sought to benefit by ruining the South. The argument appeared ironical because Shannon pictured the South as part of the scene, lacking agency: later, he would argue that slavery constituted the dearest form of labor. Should he not have been praising "old England and New England" for giving the South the dearest form of labor? While the argument became ludicrous, Shannon's use of statistics to demonstrate the loss of capital if slaves were suddenly freed did make logical sense. Referring to the 1850 government census and assessing the average slave value at \$600, Shannon estimated that southerners would lose approximately two billion dollars should slavery be eliminated. Furthermore, he employed literal

analogies to prove his case. According to Shannon both St. Domingo and the British West Indies suffered immense economic consequences following the abolition of slavery. The welfare of the negro was also at stake. Shannon reminded his audience that the negro was constitutionally adapted to the southern climate. To free the negroes would mean their end. The North, he argued, though rabid to steal them, would not receive them; colonization efforts would bankrupt the Union; continued existence in the South would lead to racial bitterness and the extinction of one or the other race. In light of these possible effects, Shannon argued that the southerners would not consent to their own demise. While virtually none of the disadvantages Shannon listed came to pass in subsequent history, they were nonetheless misgivings that discerning audience members of his time likely shared.

### **Second Major Argument**

Shannon's second major argument may be cast as a hypothetical syllogism. Logically constructed because the minor premise affirmed the antecedent, the syllogism met technical expectations.

**Major Premise:** If the Bible recognizes the slave-master relationship, then slavery is sanctioned by God.

**Minor Premise:** The Bible recognizes the slave-master relationship.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, slavery is sanctioned by God.

As in the first speech, Shannon attempted to defend slavery on the basis of the Bible. In fact, he even mentioned that a more elaborate examination of biblical evidence for slavery could be found in his earlier work, which was still available. Consequently, Shannon used the same arguments, although abbreviated, as he had in the Kentucky speech. The minor premise was probably most questioned by listeners who wondered if biblical recognition constituted blessing. Admittedly, instructions to slaveowners appeared in the Scriptures, and the delegates likely had a high regard for scriptural authority. The crucial question, however, that Shannon never entertained, was whether the Bible encouraged the taking of slaves or simply gave necessary guidance to an

economic system already in place. Accordingly, Shannon might legitimately be faulted for begging the question and assuming that biblical references gave positive support for the perpetuation of slavery.

### **Third Major Argument**

The third major argument which the speaker presented can be recast as a categorical syllogism:

**Major Premise:** The (all) laws of God constitute the natural rights of man.

**Minor Premise:** Bondage is a law of God.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, bondage is a natural right of man.

Technically valid because terms were distributed, the argument met acceptable syllogistic guidelines. While both premises needed some support to be fully acceptable, most members of the audience likely were willing to grant the major premise without hesitation. The minor premise, then, needed to be supported. Shannon argued that because the Bible contained directives about the treatment of slaves, God obviously regarded the right to own slaves as a natural right. However, Shannon's explanation of natural rights in no way approached an interpretation that equated equal and natural rights. Arguing that natural rights were based on the laws of God, Shannon extended the argument by stating that some individuals obviously functioned better as slaves. Generalizations that the master/slave relationship excelled the master/hireling relationship and that slave labor constituted the dearest form of labor must be taken as such--generalizations, opinions, without demonstrable proof. By "dearest" Shannon may have been referring to the great expense masters incurred when slaves grew sick and elderly, but he may have also been referring to the emotional attachment that sometimes existed between slaves and masters. Perhaps the weakest form of support for the argument involved Shannon's declaration that slavery was a "relationship existing between moral agents and not soil." What Shannon failed to explain was how the slave, as a moral agent, bargained for such a relationship or had his/her natural rights

protected. If owning slaves is a natural right of man, are not slaves deprived of such a right? Those listeners following the central route to persuasion would have been compelled to reject Shannon's argument.

#### **Fourth Major Argument**

Having defended slavery on the basis of economic, moral, and natural rights, Shannon next turned to political rights. His fourth argument may also be treated as a categorical syllogism:

**Major Premise:** All property owners should be protected by  
the government.

**Minor Premise:** Slave owners are property owners.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, slave owners should be protected by the  
government.

Meeting acceptable guidelines for valid construction, the syllogism concerned itself with the rights of citizens and the limitations of government. Assuming that most people regarded the protection of property rights as a legitimate function of government, the major premise needed little proof; however, the minor premise needed support. Referring to the fugitive slave law, Shannon demonstrated that the Constitution and Congress had borne witness to the fact that slaves were property. Admitting that governments possess the power to seize property, Shannon only stipulated that compensation must accompany such an action. If Great Britain were willing to compensate owners in the West Indies and if the "mongrel" republic of Mexico in 1837 compensated owners, surely a similar system could be devised in the United States. Shannon's concern, and one that all parties likely accepted, simply encouraged respect for property. Regardless of one's opinions, the Constitution regarded slaves as the property of their masters: consequently, the argument was convincing and likely accepted by convention delegates.

#### **Fifth Major Argument**



As a part of an appeal to his audience to take action, Shannon's fifth, and last, major argument appeared in a polemic directed against the abolitionists. The substance of the argument took the form of a hypothetical syllogism:

**Major Premise:** If anti-slavery fanaticism is to be stopped and the Union preserved, friends of the South and Constitution must unite.

**Minor Premise:** Anti-slavery fanaticism must be stopped and the Union preserved.

**Conclusion:** Therefore, friends of the South and Constitution must unite.

In Shannon's view, the problems facing the nation resulted from the increasing agitation of abolitionist forces. With the minor premise affirming the antecedent and the conclusion affirming the consequent, the syllogism was satisfactorily constructed. Shannon particularly needed to prove the major premise. For proof he relied on a literal comparison: just as the pro-slavery forces in Kentucky had successfully beaten back emancipationists in 1849, a national effort could deliver a death blow to abolitionists. The comparison, however, was weak: to defeat emancipation in a slave state, such as Kentucky, could likely be achieved, but to fight the abolitionists on equal footing in territories undecided on the issue, was quite another matter. Although Shannon was optimistic about silencing the abolitionists, members of his audience likely doubted that concerted efforts could stop the growing abolitionist movement. In fact, pro-slavery conventions like the one at Lexington only seemed to fan the flames. The appeal to Constitutional law was more reasonable, but the possibility of amending the Constitution to prohibit slavery became a greater possibility with new territories such as Kansas being the decisive swing votes. In the final analysis, while audience members may have had misgivings about how they should unite, their very presence at a pro-slavery convention indicated a desire to unite and a willingness to accept such an argument.

Concluding that southerners will not consent to the abolition of slavery, that slavery is sanctioned by God, that bondage is a natural right of man, that slaveowners should be protected by the government, and that friends of the South and of the Constitution should unite, Shannon argued

for slavery on economic, moral, and Constitutional grounds. Although the partisan slave delegation may have identified with all five arguments, in the critic's estimation, Shannon failed to prove that slavery was sanctioned by God and that bondage was a natural right of man.

### Summary and Comments

How did Shannon's arguments compare with those advanced by other pro-slavery rhetors? In the field of slavery apologia, Larry Tise has conducted the most definitive study of late.<sup>14</sup> Lamenting previous historical caricatures of the pro-slavery spokesperson, Tise attempts to construct a composite based upon the actual writings and speeches of the men. His research has led him to regard most of what he had previously read about the pro-slavery spokespersons as myth.<sup>15</sup> Myth #1 concerns the origins of pro-slavery thought in America as springing from the Old South. Tise argues from the evidence that a "rich and telling proslavery history" existed in the colonial and revolutionary period, years prior to the emergence of the Old South. Myth #2 assumes that pro-slavery literature experienced a new form in the 1820s: a new form unique to southern defenders of slavery. Tise argues otherwise stating that pro-slavery sentiments had been present earlier than 1820 and that the "positive good" defense had been used in other societies. If anything, Tise sees the span from 1808-1832 as a "neglected period" as far as slavery defenses were concerned. Myth #3 purports that southerners alone defended slavery; Tise states that his composite biographical study of 300 defenders<sup>16</sup> suggested the endeavor was almost without geographical distinction.

Furthermore, Tise concludes that seven themes undergirded the speeches of pro-slavery spokespersons. First, seventy-five percent of the writings analyzed suggests that man was

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<sup>14</sup> Larry E. Tise, A History and Defense of Slavery in America, 1701-1840 (Athens: U of GA Press, 1987).

<sup>15</sup> The standard work on pro-slavery argumentation has been that by William Sumner Jenkins, Pro-slavery Thought in the Old South (Chapel Hill: U of NC Press, 1935).

<sup>16</sup> Those who published defenses. Tise's work statistically analyzed 91 published defenses.

governed without consent or that the slavery principle was implied by all government. The Kentucky speech emphasizes this theme more than the Missouri speech. Second, the origin of slavery is a predominant theme. Some thirty-three percent of the writings blame society; others the inequality of man. Only four attribute slavery to the fall of man. Shannon's Kentucky speech indicates the fall of man as the origin; in the Missouri speech he attributes American slavery to "old England and New England." A third theme rests on a legal foundation and takes various forms: racial inequality, revealed will of God, happiness of the greatest number, right of wise to govern, natural custom of society, no natural rights guaranteed. Both of Shannon's speeches referred to the will of God. The Kentucky speech emphasizes racial inequality, happiness, and the right of the wise to govern; the Missouri speech maintains that natural rights exist but that slavery is also a part of the natural order. A fourth major theme suggests that slavery should or would be a perpetual institution. In both addresses, Shannon indicates that slavery could legitimately be abolished if proper compensation were paid; although not eager to accept such an arrangement, Shannon does indicate a spirit of reason and fair play. A fifth major theme focuses on the inferiority of the negro, particularly the blackness as being a mark of inferiority. To his credit, Shannon in neither address refers to the blackness as being a mark or sign of inferiority. Granted, he refers to the negro as being constitutionally adapted to work in the South and that he expresses doubts about the two races co-existing, Shannon cannot be said to have emphasized this theme. The sixth theme regards the negro as being happier enslaved than free: in this regard, Shannon articulates the theme in both speeches. Finally, Tise concludes that the Scriptures proved the most important source for establishing the morality of slavery. Although never suggesting that the negro descended from Ham, the cursed son of Noah, Shannon does rely extensively on the Bible in both speeches.

Assuming that Shannon attempted to reach different audiences through one speech, how can organization and invention be said to have assisted such role duality? Obviously, the preface to the Kentucky speech allowed Shannon to establish good will with more than his immediate audience (the Franklin Society). Of the two addresses, the Missouri speech appeared to be more cogently

organized, but both speeches would have benefitted by better transitions and previews. From the artistic standpoint, organization played a insignificant or limited part in role duality; viewed conversely, lack of organization might be considered a characteristic of those engaging in role duality. Those who highly elaborated on Shannon's arguments in the Kentucky speech likely raised objections to three of the four major arguments. In the Missouri speech, those who highly elaborated had sufficient reason to contest three of the five major arguments. Those already holding pro-slavery views may have regarded all major ideas as reasonable. Based on these two speeches, roughly half of Shannon's arguments would have been acceptable to those who highly elaborated. If Shannon is a representative practitioner of role duality, one might be led to conclude that the appearance of being logical is more crucial for success (attainment of consecutive perlocutionary effects) than the validity of every major argument.

## **Ethical, Emotional, and Stylistic Appeals in the Selected Speeches**

### **CHAPTER 5**

Since the classical period of Greece, rhetoricians have recognized the importance of ethical, emotional, and stylistic appeals. Recent research by Petty and Cacioppo has suggested that audiences may be persuaded by appeals or cues other than argument and evidence, what these authors termed the peripheral route to persuasion. In like manner, James Benjamin, while theorizing about the relation of speech act theory to rhetoric, concluded that the audience which has "agreed" to accept the role of the speaker and his words as sufficient proof may short-circuit the usual route of persuasion. Both of these views have tended to uphold ancient concepts and contemporary perspectives of rhetoric. For instance, Aristotle expressed concern that the treatises on rhetoric of his day emphasized structure and style (persuasion by the peripheral route) to the exclusion of argument. Similarly, Mary John Smith's claim that the locus of intentionality resides within the auditor suggests that listeners are active participants who may or may not critically elaborate argument and evidence.<sup>1</sup> Listeners, in other words, might bring their own expectations to a speech and judge it accordingly, i.e., not according to the speaker's intention. While not disputing Smith's observation, the concept of role duality suggests that a speaker may attempt to effect and evoke multiple intentions within audiences by utilizing an array of persuasive cues. Consequently, chapter five considers Shannon's ethical, emotional, and stylistic appeals as comprising speech acts designed to meet multiple role expectations.

### **The Kentucky Speech**

#### **Ethical Appeals**

While logical appeals may be considered "central" to persuasion, ethical appeals designed to aid a speaker's credibility "may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion," or at

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<sup>1</sup> Mary John Smith, Persuasion and Human Action: A Review and Critique of Social Influence Theories (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Pub. Co., 1982) 9.

least so thought Aristotle.<sup>2</sup> Enhanced by a display of good reason, good moral conduct, and goodwill, a speaker's image, or ethos, may also be furthered by attempts to link his cause with admirable goals or persons; conversely, attempts to link the opposition with unworthy goals may also raise speaker credibility.

In relation to a speech, one can speak of a speaker's initial or prior ethos, derived ethos, and terminal ethos. Prior ethos concerns a speaker's image. On the occasion of the first printing of the speech, Shannon enjoyed the popularity of being at the helm of church activity in Kentucky. As president of Bacon College, Shannon was likewise regarded as a scholar whose judgments reflected studied opinions. Furthermore, Shannon, like numerous other preachers, was known to own slaves. In what ways did Shannon seek to establish his credibility in the Kentucky speech? An analysis of the text revealed five strategies employed by Shannon. He: 1) demonstrated intellectual honesty, 2) affirmed biblical authority, 3) stressed fairness, 4) claimed honorable motives, and 5) assailed abolitionist character.

First, Shannon sought to demonstrate **intellectual honesty**. Relating his own progression of thought on the issue of slavery, Shannon noted:

The Author of the following pages, when a youth, was constitutionally, and by education, intensely opposed to Domestic Slavery. A prayerful and protracted examination of the Bible, however, on that subject, left him no alternative, but to abandon his prejudice . . . He claims nothing of the reader, however, but a candid examination of the argument.<sup>3</sup>

Shannon further expressed regard for intellectual integrity by establishing a philosophical base for his views on slavery: commenting on this foundation, Shannon remarked that the reader was

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<sup>2</sup> W. Rhys Roberts, trans., The Rhetoric, by Aristotle (1954; New York: Random House, 1984) 25.

<sup>3</sup> James Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 2.

now better prepared for an "intelligent conception of our subject."<sup>4</sup> More than mere assertion, Shannon displayed scholarship by stating that highly respected biblical commentators interpreted passages as he had; by associating his views with those held by men of distinction, Shannon sought to establish the integrity of his ideas.<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, the printed version of the speech contained lengthy footnotes supporting the legal rights of slaveowners: such research testified to his familiarity with Constitutional law.<sup>6</sup>

Second, Shannon affirmed **biblical authority**. Repeatedly, Shannon referred to the Bible as an infallible standard. These references suggested that Shannon not only revered the Bible, but also was a man well versed with the scriptures. The speeches cited numerous passages of scripture in both the Old and the New Testaments to reinforce his views. Citing biblical references legislating slave conditions, Shannon sought to use these to his advantage by asking whether God could be said to perpetuate and endorse a "wicked act."<sup>7</sup> By relying on the biblical references, Shannon shifted the debate from slavery to God's credibility! He raised the question of religious authority again toward the end of the speech:

But a very grave question, and one, that, in my estimation, lies at the basis of the philosophy of this whole subject, might here be propounded, viz: By what authority can any community deprive the individual of the natural liberty, which God gave him? I answer, by the authority of God himself.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 6.

<sup>5</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 9.

<sup>6</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 11.

<sup>7</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 9.

<sup>8</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 26.

The assertion that God endorsed slavery and denied natural liberties to some humans allowed Shannon to argue that slaveholders, and particularly their defenders, were not morally corrupt. Similarly, the appeals likely enhanced or reinforced Shannon's credibility by portraying him as a pious Christian and brave defender of God's word.

Third, Shannon may have enhanced his credibility by stressing *fairness*, a value that most people find admirable. Granting, at least entertaining, the possibility of slavery's elimination, Shannon called for fairness in compensating the owners:

If it can be satisfactorily proved, that the good of the State demands, that involuntary servitude shall be abolished, let it be done *honestly* [italics and capitalization, his], HONORABLY--and not as the highwayman possesses himself of the traveler's purse.<sup>9</sup>

In like manner, he pledged to be fair in considering the arguments of his opposition--the abolitionists:

We desire to treat them and their arguments with the greatest fairness; and therefore we will let them speak for themselves, selecting for that purpose the ablest anti-slavery writer in America, the distinguished President of Brown University.<sup>10</sup>

Shannon particularly delighted in finding points of agreement with Dr. Francis Wayland, a noted abolitionist and president of Brown University whose text on ethics was widely used in colleges. The two-pronged appeal asked for fair compensation to slaveowners and pledged fairness in dealing with the abolitionists. Both statements were likely regarded as honorable and honest requests.

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<sup>9</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 11.

<sup>10</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 21.



Fourth, Shannon claimed **honorable motives**, a strategy which may have improved his credibility. In his words, his "sole object is to do good."<sup>11</sup> Acknowledging that numerous others had solicited his views on the subject of slavery, Shannon expressed gratitude to the Franklin Society for inviting him to speak: the reference to others who had solicited his remarks suggested that his arguments were worthy of attention. Notwithstanding, Shannon also warned: "Had I a voice, that could penetrate to earth's remotest bounds, I would say to the misguided, though amiable, enthusiast every where...Beware!"<sup>12</sup> Referring twice to the "young gentlemen" of the Franklin Society, Shannon reinforced his desire to do good by encouraging them to practice virtue if they wanted to enjoy freedom.<sup>13</sup> Shannon's statement of his own intentions and his urging others to live a morally upright life showed him to be a man of virtue and high ethical character.

Fifth, by assailing the character of his opposition--the abolitionists, Shannon may have attempted to enhance the audience's impression of him as a man of high character. According to Thonssen, Baird, and Braden, a speaker may focus attention on his character by linking the opposition to that which is not virtuous.<sup>14</sup> The abolitionist defense must be bad considering the arguments, he quipped.<sup>15</sup> At times this characterization was implied. For instance, Shannon referred to the "intelligent"<sup>16</sup> reader's ability to agree with his reasoning; implying that those who disagreed were not so intelligent. By diverting attention from the logic of the arguments to the issue of credibility and image, Shannon subtly shifted roles from debater to a

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<sup>11</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 2.

<sup>12</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 28, 29.

<sup>13</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 32.

<sup>14</sup> Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 458.

<sup>15</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 24.

<sup>16</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 13.

fundraiser who stroked his intended listeners' pride. The following speech acts carried similar innuendos that likely affirmed the convictions of Shannon's intended audience:

"nothing can possibly be plainer"

"enlightened Christian benevolence...would say"

"all who are intelligent and candid on this subject admit"

"it is obvious"

"it is undeniable"

"it is evident"<sup>17</sup>

Nonetheless, when Shannon turned to fundraising and attempted to associate abolitionists and their arguments with unworthy goals, he contradicted his own pledge to be fair. In this sense, the strategy likely hurt Shannon's credibility as much as it helped him. For instance, Shannon asserted that:

The worst enemy of our country, therefore, is the man who,  
either in his own person, treats the constitution and laws  
with practical disrespect, or encourages others so to do.  
This deep, and, I had almost said, unpardonable guilt, is  
shared alike by the meanest criminal.<sup>18</sup>

While audience members who held similar views as Shannon likely agreed with him, objective listeners were likely disappointed at Shannon's failure to abide by his own rules and associate abolitionists with the vilest of criminals.

### Emotional Appeals

Shannon's fierce attack on the character of abolitionists, in addition to ethical appeals enhancing his own credibility by creating doubts in the minds of the listeners about the

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<sup>17</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 13, 16, 18, 19, 22.

<sup>18</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 31.

intelligence, integrity, and goodwill of the abolitionists, probably aroused the emotions of his audience. Indeed, words that evoked emotional responses and thereby functioned as performatives likely swayed some listeners. Even Aristotle, who sought to raise rhetoric's standing by emphasizing that public speakers should give precedence to argument construction, noted that "our judgments when we are pleased and friendly are not the same as when we are pained and hostile."<sup>19</sup>

An important task of the critic is to discuss and evaluate how the speaker adapted to his audience in order to dispose them favorably to his contentions. The search for speech acts that aroused the emotions assumes even greater importance when it is noted that some researchers maintain that memory and experiential meanings are related to feeling and not the storing of symbols.<sup>20</sup> Tony Schwartz, for instance, argues that "meaning is the contextual relation of what we hear to our previous experience." Emotional appeals, then, may be seen as triggering one's "evoked-recall mechanism," with an increased level of rapport between speaker and listener naturally resulting.

In his speech, Shannon appealed to three main emotions: disgust and anger, religious belief, and patriotic sentiment. Obviously, Shannon also sought to damage the credibility of the abolitionists through these appeals; however, because of the emotive language used by Shannon, it was considered best to discuss these attempts under emotional appeals.

A principal emotional appeal used by Shannon was **disgust and anger**. To create this feeling, Shannon explicitly charged that the abolitionists were irrational, dangerous, and guilty of misleading people :

In the name of reason, then, what blindness must have taken  
hold of men's minds, or what wickedness possessed their hearts  
when they madly urge a fanatical and infuriated mass to a

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<sup>19</sup> Aristotle 25.

<sup>20</sup> Tony Schwartz, The Responsive Chord (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1973) 66-72; Media: The Second God (New York: Random House, 1981) 17-24.

system of *wholesale robbery* [italics, his].<sup>21</sup>

With cynicism Shannon elsewhere referred to the abolitionists as "wonderful sages" but wondered "what process of reasoning" they used.<sup>22</sup> In other instances his language was even plainer. Abolitionists acted on a "feeling away down in the hearts," possessed the "wildest of utopian dreams," were "misguided enthusiasts," "fanatics," and "madness in extreme."<sup>23</sup> Further creating hostility toward the abolitionists, Shannon repeatedly called them ignorant and prejudiced.<sup>24</sup> To owners of slaves who agreed with Shannon, such characterizations probably increased their anger and contempt for a group seeking to divest them of their property.

Second, Shannon appealed to the religious sentiments of his listeners by accusing the abolitionists of disregarding the Bible. He rendered their conduct as blasphemous to God and His Word. Often qualifying his remarks with the phrase "if the Bible be true,"<sup>25</sup> Shannon attempted to demonstrate that abolitionists had little positive regard for the Bible. According to Shannon, their belligerence led them to believe that the "Messiah overlooked" a condemnation of slavery. "Imprudent" and "impious" the abolitionists "created infallibles," pretended "to be wiser than the Creator," and committed "infidelity."<sup>26</sup> In contrast, he regarded slaveowners as blessed by God: blessed in the sense that their right to own slaves was "sacredly guarded, and the violation of that right as distinctly prohibited by Jehovah."<sup>27</sup> If cursed by abolitionists, slaveowners emerged as blessed by God. Because slaveowners were blessed and favored by God, Shannon intimated that

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<sup>21</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 11.

<sup>22</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 20, 21.

<sup>23</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 23, 25, 28, 29.

<sup>24</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 2, 8, 16, 17, 21, 24, 30.

<sup>25</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 18, 24.

<sup>26</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 19, 9, 23, 2, 7.

<sup>27</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 11

they were also compelled to refute blasphemers and support those (such as Bacon College or Shannon) who believed in God's word.

Third, Shannon sought to arouse the **patriotic feelings** of his listeners by portraying the abolitionists as rebels and anarchists. In vivid terms, he argued:

The wide-spread contempt for this statute, exhibited by the politico-religious fanaticism and infidelity of the age, is one of the most alarming symptoms of approaching anarchy, and the speedy overflow of our liberties.<sup>28</sup>

Later in the speech, Shannon described a war-torn country. Directed to the abolitionists, but designed to appeal to patriotic sentiment in the audience, the paragraph resembled a "woe speech" from Israelite prophecy:

Beware! You know not what you are doing. You are fighting against God....Miseries, heart-rending and appalling you may produce. Carnage and desolation you may spread over the fair face of nature. The bloody horrors of the Reign of Terror you may re-enact.<sup>29</sup>

Such a threat clearly sought to stir patriotic feelings, while the emotive imagery of blood and carnage contributed to a picture of horror for those who defied law. Lacking love for country, abolitionists, in Shannon's estimation, were traitors:

The worst enemy of our country, therefore, is the man who...treats the constitution and laws with disrespect... This deep, and, I had almost said, unpardonable guilt, is shared alike by the meanest criminal. . . .He, then, is a traitor to civil liberty, though such may not be his

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<sup>28</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 7.

<sup>29</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 28.

design, who aids the guilty.<sup>30</sup>

In contrast, slaveowners, exhibited a respect for the nation's laws and the Constitution. Shannon argued that no people had ever devised a document better than the Constitution: it was "glorious" and "blood-bought."<sup>31</sup> Many listeners, not far removed from the War of 1812 and with ancestors who had fought in the Revolutionary War, may have been particularly moved by such patriotic overtures. The horrors associated with the French Revolution, an even closer event in time, may have also caused Shannon's listeners to contemplate the danger of anarchy.

Emotional and ethical proofs interacted throughout the speech. Shannon portrayed slaveowners as good and associated them with positive emotions; on the other hand, abolitionists were bad and so to be feared and distrusted. Shannon characterized abolitionists in a disparaging light, dismissed their arguments, and implied that defenders of slavery were rational, objective, intelligent, reverent, and obedient to both God and government.

The ethical-emotional tie may in part be related to the nature of the address. While persuasive aims and intentions have been noted, the discourse itself functioned as an epideictic speech: as a demonstration of opposing value systems. In this moral play, Shannon depicted evil abolitionists as a threat to the happiness of God-fearing slaveowners. Interestingly, the emotional energy of the speech was directed *not* at the practice of owning slaves but at abolitionists, a convenient enemy that permitted Shannon to avoid discussing an abusive labor system.

### **Stylistic Appeals**

Style refers to the "way in which the speaker clothed his ideas with language."<sup>32</sup> Rhetoricians have conventionally analyzed style by four criteria: correctness, clarity, appropriateness, and ornamentation. During rhetoric's long history, the canon of style has at

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<sup>30</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 31.

<sup>31</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 31.

<sup>32</sup> Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 489.

times dominated rhetorical activity and at other times been slighted. For example, during the medieval period, rhetorical handbooks were replete with examples of tropes and figures (ornamentation) which were thought to help secure the attention of the audience.<sup>33</sup> This section explores the possible ways style contributed to the energy and vividness of the speech. Another way of wording the same thought in a question would be "what stylistic appeals allowed Shannon to further his arguments through language?" To accomplish this task, the speech texts have been analyzed for word combinations that could be said to have enhanced or hindered correctness, clarity, and appropriateness.

Shannon used correct grammar and language throughout the speech. Since the address was published, it may be assumed that any grammatical errors were found before the speech was polished. As for clarity, the analysis revealed that Shannon spoke rather abstractly about "happiness," "misery," "freedom," "destruction of self will," "grades of bondage," "coveting," and "virtue." All of these concepts needed definition and illustration, but Shannon offered little help to the listener or reader. Perhaps, he desired to stay on the more ambiguous level of abstraction. Interestingly, he opted to refer to slavery in euphemistic expressions, such as "hereditary bondage" and "domestic servitude."<sup>34</sup> Given the suggested audiences, it was not surprising, but indeed appropriate, that Shannon referred to abolitionists in scathing terms while speaking more favorably of southerners on whom he depended for support. This emotive language can be amply observed in the various examples provided in the discussion of emotional proofs.

However, the most distinctive feature of Shannon's style was his heavy reliance on ornamentation, what the ancient rhetoricians linked to persuasive aims. For purposes of this study, these stylistic devices are seen as contributing to the overall aesthetic value of the speech

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<sup>33</sup> Augustine, for instance, believed that stylistic appeals attracted listener attention, helped dispel phantasms, and led to the discovery of truth which resided within every soul. See James J. Murphy, Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from Saint Augustine to the Renaissance (Berkeley: U of California P, 1974) 288-289.

<sup>34</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 2, 9.

and as attempts to make the speech memorable and interesting. Such an investigation, if mechanically conducted, is not incidental or meaningless, but rather reveals the literary skill with which Shannon clothed his remarks. Specifically, Shannon employed antithesis, rhetorical questions, emphasis, litotes, repetition, synonymy, and the imperative mood.

Shannon extensively employed antithesis to secure and maintain attention as can be seen in these selected examples:

"we must become fools if we are to be wise"

"Bible never contravenes but harmonizes"

"all are unceasingly engaged; all are not equally successful"

"animal propensities are too strong, intellect too feeble"

"slaveholders are blessed, not abhorred"<sup>35</sup>

Altogether, Shannon made use of antithesis eleven times. Similarly, Shannon used rhetorical questions eleven times. Both of these stylistic devices provided Shannon with opportunity for an animated and dynamic delivery. Furthermore, the devices provided Shannon authorial power by fiat: antithesis enabled him to negate the position of abolitionists, and rhetorical questions enabled him to assume that his positions were superior. Considering the number of times these devices were used, it seems that he had made conscious effort to arouse the interest and emotions of his listeners.

Shannon gained emphasis through a variety of other channels: litotes, repetition, synonymy, euphony, and imperatives. Litotes or creative understatement was used three times: for instance Shannon stated that he claimed "nothing of the reader but..."<sup>36</sup> Shannon used repetition near the end of the speech in two stirring moments. When addressing the abolitionists, Shannon remarked: "You know not what you are doing. You are fighting against

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<sup>35</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 2, 3, 4, 8, 9.

<sup>36</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 2. Also 3.



God...You can never succeed. You might as well expect to scale heaven."<sup>37</sup> Further repetition was used in the last paragraph of the speech as Shannon encouraged acceptance:

Thus shall you be free indeed--worthy citizens of our glorious confederacy. Thus shall you aid most efficiently in perpetuating our free institutions. And thus--and thus alone--shall you attain to citizenship in that better land...<sup>38</sup>

Additionally, he used **synonymy**, the use of synonyms for emphasis, six times. When speaking of contempt for the Bible, Shannon warned of "approaching anarchy, and the speedy overthrow:"<sup>39</sup> the rephrasing served as a strategic act to emphasize. Fourteen times Shannon utilized **ecphonesis**, exclamation demonstrating passion, as when he exasperately pleaded "in the name of reason" and when he ended a sentence with "let God be true."<sup>40</sup> Finally, Shannon occasionally used the **imperative** mood for emphasis as when he urged the abolitionists to "Be silent and listen" or "Deluded fanatic, hear with reverence."<sup>41</sup>

The number of stylistic appeals employed suggested that Shannon gave considerable attention to the text of the speeches. They particularly provided the vehicle for Shannon's elaborate use of emotional appeals. Finally, they likely accomplished the speech act that Shannon most desired: to excite his audience and lead them to accept his position via the peripheral route.

### The Missouri Speech

#### Ethical Appeals

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<sup>37</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 29.

<sup>38</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 32.

<sup>39</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 7. Also 10, 13, 17, 25, 28.

<sup>40</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 11, 15. Also 3, 4, 15-17, 20, 24, 28, 32.

<sup>41</sup> Shannon, "The Philosophy of Slavery," 10, 11. See footnotes 29 and 38 for additional examples.

In the Missouri speech, Shannon defended at length the propriety of his remarks on slavery as a gospel preacher. Given his prior ethos and image, the ethical appeals were particularly needed. As president of the University of Missouri at Columbia, Shannon had come under repeated attack by The Missouri Statesman for his political and religious views; furthermore, his administration had been investigated by a special legislative committee. These events had undoubtedly raised doubts in the minds of many people about Shannon's character; in fact, one-fourth of the counties represented at the pro-slavery convention voted against allowing Shannon the floor. In light of these circumstances, Shannon made more direct attempts to enhance his credibility in this speech than he did in the Kentucky address. Specifically, he contended that he was a man of integrity, intelligence, and good will by stating that he: 1) was compelled by duty, 2) was victimized for his convictions, 3) claimed logical superiority, 4) affirmed biblical authority, 5) evidenced restraint--at times, and 6) assailed abolitionist character.

One way that Shannon sought to establish his credibility was to argue that it was his duty to speak: indeed, duty is viewed by many people as the supreme good.<sup>42</sup> His explanation was two-fold. First, he portrayed himself as a concerned citizen who saw it as his patriotic duty to speak:

I would consider myself recreant to these high obligations,  
and unworthy of the exalted privileges of American  
citizenship, were I, for any personal considerations, to  
shrink from the performance of any duty, that might  
contribute even a little to the enlightenment of the public  
mind, and thus to the peace, prosperity, and perpetuity of  
the American Union.<sup>43</sup>

Second, Shannon's contention that God looked with favor on the United States entitled him, indeed, compelled him as a preacher to share his informed opinion on a "crisis" occurring within God's

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<sup>42</sup> Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 457. Note the discussion of Kantian philosophy.

<sup>43</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 5.

chosen instrument. Such a belief enabled him to speak without reservation on the "morality" of slavery:

Hence I feel impelled alike by patriotism, and the highest regard for the salvation of a lost world, to enlighten my fellow-men to the utmost of my ability on this absorbing topic. And never did I descend into the baptismal waters, or enter into the place of secret prayer, or come to the communion table of my God, with a better conscience, or a purer regard for the glory of God, and the salvation of the human family, than I bring to the present discussion.<sup>44</sup>

The cost of speaking the truth, in Shannon's opinion, led him to be **victimized by political enemies**, suggesting to his audience that he was a man of impeccable integrity. This recurring theme underscored Shannon's resolve to speak, despite the possibility of personal injury that might result from disgruntled abolitionists. Seemingly, Shannon used this rhetorical tactic, his portrayal as a "martyr,"<sup>45</sup> to solicit sympathy from the audience and to cast abolitionists in the role of slanderers. Arguing that the issue of slavery was a moral question, Shannon affirmed that ministers were best prepared to speak on the subject of morality:

In the name of reason, then, has it come to this, that in the slaveholding State of Missouri a Minister of the Gospel is to be denounced as a "politico-religious priest;" to be unceasingly slandered and persecuted for daring to teach publicly, as well as privately, that slaveholding is not morally wrong, and for thus defending the Constitution and laws of the State in which he lives? Are Missourians sufficiently demented to encourage

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<sup>44</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 5, 6.

<sup>45</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 6.

and sanction such vile persecution...<sup>46</sup>

As in the Kentucky speech, Shannon sought to associate his ideas with intelligence; hence, he claimed **logical superiority** to abolitionists in an effort to gain the respect of the audience. Referring to and boasting of the defense of slavery set forth in the Kentucky speech, Shannon stated it "has never been logically answered" and called his position "impregnable."<sup>47</sup> Referring to abolitionists Shannon retorted, "The advocate of a doctrine so self-evidently absurd is not to be trusted."<sup>48</sup> Again he referred to them as having either a "very weak head or a very bad heart."<sup>49</sup> Shannon did grant that good men might think slaveholding to be sinful, but added quickly that such men obviously had not thoroughly examined the Bible.

Again, as in the Kentucky speech, Shannon affirmed **biblical authority**, suggesting that he was a God-fearing man of integrity. Shannon viewed God as positively ordaining slavery, and reminded his hearers that "God does not lie."<sup>50</sup> While quoting several passages of scripture, Shannon spent less time arguing from the Bible than he had in the Kentucky speech, but even so, he mentioned the former speech's availability should someone care to study further. So convinced was Shannon of his conclusions that he remarked, "if slavery can be shown to be morally wrong then the Bible is a cheat."<sup>51</sup>

Finally, Shannon at times evidenced **restraint or patience**, an admirable character trait that listeners may have associated with integrity. Granting that military resistance was a viable option for southerners should slavery be abolished by the federal government, Shannon

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<sup>46</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 6.

<sup>47</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 10.

<sup>48</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 27.

<sup>49</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 28.

<sup>50</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 12.

<sup>51</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 15.

admonished that all peaceful measures be exhausted first. At times speaking passionately about revolutionary spirit, Shannon clearly desired both the preservation of the Constitution and the union. These mixed emotions led him to affiliate with the "Know-Nothings," a political party that upheld the Constitution and union despite slavery views, and demonstrated a moderation that belied his vituperation:

I desire to be a real, bona fide know-nothing; not caring to inquire whether a man, who is sound on this question, be whig or democrat, native citizen or naturalized. All I ask is, that he be loyal to the Constitution, and the constitutional rights of the South.<sup>52</sup>

Attempting to show that he was a man of patience, Shannon may have had little effect in enhancing his ethos, however, given the fact that he assailed abolitionist character. Shannon sought to engender doubt and distrust for abolitionist views. Maligning their arguments, Shannon called the abolitionists "insane," "idiotic," "madmen," "ignoramuses," "knaves," "simpletons," "absurd," and "prejudiced."<sup>53</sup> As in the Kentucky speech, the abolitionists became the target of severe criticism expressed in highly emotional language.

### Emotional Appeals

Analysis of the text for speech acts that elicited emotional reactions in the audience reveals that Shannon employed four appeals. These four appeals were inextricably tied to his ethical appeals as well since he mentioned the virtues of slaveowners and the vices of abolitionists. Specifically, Shannon sought to arouse: 1) anger, 2) religious sentiment, 3) patriotism, and 4) sympathy.

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<sup>52</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 30.

<sup>53</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 8, 9, 14, 15, 18.

First and foremost, Shannon sought to evoke **anger** in his listeners over the aggressive acts of the abolitionists. Shannon charged the abolitionists with blatant malevolence. Nine times he referred to their "fanaticism" and four times to their "persevering aggression." Describing their misdeeds in active voice, Shannon noted that they: "forced," were "rabid to steal," committed "barefaced public robbery," issued "malignant threats," attempted to "assassinate reputation," "plunder," and "exaggerate."<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, Shannon attempted to incite bitter feelings through epithet. He referred to abolitionists as "foul demons," "negro thieves," "robbers," "villains," "fowl fiends," and as a "motley crew." As for their influence, abolitionists published "filthy lying sheets," exercised "fiendish efforts," were "notorious," and were comparable to "vipers."<sup>55</sup> Given the circumstances that gave rise to the pro-slavery convention, namely the possibility of Kansas becoming a free state, Shannon's immediate audience likely needed little prompting to feel anger and contempt for abolitionists; such anger might induce them to support pro-slavery institutions, such as Christian University, or pro-slavery spokespersons, like Shannon.

Second, Shannon attempted to arouse **religious contempt** for abolitionists who were portrayed as unholy men. Shannon repeatedly referred to the blasphemy of abolitionists. Abolitionists, in Shannon's view, composed an "unholy alliance," who might "impiously dare," "wrest, force, and misinterpret" Scriptures, and who constituted "enemies to God and man."<sup>56</sup> By castigating the abolitionists, Shannon, it seemed, appealed to those in his immediate audience who had strong religious convictions: those men in his audience who would be more inclined to accept his arguments and implement his suggestions because they were emotionally compelled.

Third, Shannon appealed to the **patriotic** feelings of his listeners by questioning the loyalty of the abolitionists. Arguing that abolitionists demonstrated little regard for the Constitution and law and order, Shannon further maintained that they jeopardized national unity

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<sup>54</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 7, 8, 23, 24, 27.

<sup>55</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 7, 28, 9, 23-25.

<sup>56</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 1, 12, 15, 28.

by continual agitation. Hence, he referred to them as "traitors," "abolition higher-law traitors," "free-soil traitors," "British Tories," "advocates of division," "domestic traitors," and in the singular as an "enemy," and a "second Arnold."<sup>57</sup> Compelled by a sense of duty to stop the abolitionists, Shannon asked all who respected the Constitution to unite in their efforts to preserve it and the Union:

If, then, the Union is to be saved, the South must not allow themselves to be divided, weakened and betrayed by domestic traitors . . . must combine all their forces in one compact and serried host, and present an unbroken front in defense of their constitutional rights.<sup>58</sup>

To his fault, Shannon failed to specify in what explicit ways these dutiful patriots could act in concert, if they were united. Implicitly, they might wish to reward institutions and spokespersons who were willing to take patriotic stands.

Fourth, Shannon appealed to feelings of **sympathy** and **altruism** to support the argument that slavery constituted the dearest form of labor. Shannon pictured the slaveowner as merciful because "in decrepitude" slaves were cared for: unlike the hireling, slaves could depend on the care of the master when sick or old.<sup>59</sup> Slaveholders could in like manner be considered holy because their right to own slaves was legislated by God. Consequently, statements such as "God will defend the right" implied that slaveholders were right.<sup>60</sup> Different from the other emotional appeals, this appeal accentuated the humaneness of slavery. That Shannon did not rely heavily on this appeal was probably to his advantage since numerous examples of inhumane treatment of slaves could surely be produced.

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<sup>57</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 9, 12, 24, 25, 27, 28, 32.

<sup>58</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 30.

<sup>59</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 16, 17.

<sup>60</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 32.

### Stylistic Appeals

As in the Kentucky speech, Shannon's language and grammar were correct. Unlike the former speech, Shannon used less ornamentation, but stressed clarity in describing what he thought of abolitionists. Nevertheless, Shannon was unclear on how supporters of the Constitution should "unite." Similarly, his discussion of "natural rights" needed greater clarification. Despite these criticisms, his remarks were appropriate to the occasion; since the Missouri speech functioned more as a key-note address, Shannon may have planned to excite and expound on the stark need more than detail a plan which should result from the convention. To expound on the problem and to clarify his sentiments, Shannon used imagery to a greater extent than in the Kentucky speech. He pictured the Constitution as lying "prostrate," as "mangled," and as "bleeding."<sup>61</sup> Evidently, Shannon hoped the powerful, compelling battle images would create sufficient motivation for his soldiers (his intended audience) to accept and follow his command. Indeed those who would respond to the crisis were likened to soldiers:

Would they [southerners] not rather, in view of the  
inevitable and utter ruin that emancipation would bring in  
its train, appeal to the God of battles, buckle on their armor,  
meet the fanatical invader on the outposts of the Constitution  
with fire and faggot, and, if need be, perish bravely in the  
defence of their altars and their firesides...<sup>62</sup>

Stylistic figures also played an important role in the speech. Rhetorical critics Thonssen, Baird, and Braden reflected:

[T]he notion is current that the studied composition of speeches  
in language of power and elegance is somehow suspect, that it

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<sup>61</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 9.

<sup>62</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 9.



results in a contrived rhetoric. . . .One might counter that there is no inherent conflict between speaking with power--even rhetorical elegance--and speaking what is right, provided the speaker makes the appropriate adjustment to his listeners.<sup>63</sup>

Admittedly, the rhetorical conventions of Shannon's day called for a more ornate speech than might be delivered today. Even so, rhetorical figures have the potential of enlivening the delivery and making memorable the comments. Specifically, Shannon used rhetorical questions, polysyndeton, asyndeton, antithesis, synonymy, alliteration, assonance, litotes, ecphrasis, and repetition.

Shannon utilized rhetorical questions some twenty-five times. He combined a series of questions in the following example:

But who can believe that the framers of the Constitution intended to give Congress this monstrous power? What inhabitant of a slave State, who has fairly and fully examined the subject, can advocate it, unless identified, at least in sympathy, with the abolitionists? And when the advocates of this pernicious political heresy have accomplished, in their own estimation, this marvelous exploit of logical legerdemain, what have they proved?<sup>64</sup>

Given the specious arguments presented, Shannon pursued the peripheral route through an array of stylistic features. These devices likely served as speech acts to convince his intended audience of role sincerity.

In addition to rhetorical questions, Shannon constructed series with effect, employing both **polysyndeton** (abundance of conjunctions)<sup>65</sup> and **asyndeton** (absence of conjunctions). To

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<sup>63</sup> Thonssen, Baird, and Braden 507.

<sup>64</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 25.

<sup>65</sup> See footnote #44 for example.

provide an example of asyndeton: "These, fellow-citizens, are my sentiments, politically, legally, morally, constitutionally." <sup>66</sup>

Unlike the Kentucky speech, Shannon used antithesis sparingly in the speech.<sup>67</sup> He occasionally employed synonymy: "who but a madman, a traitor, or a fiend..."<sup>68</sup> Moreover, he used alliteration, assonance, and litotes but the devices played a minor role.<sup>69</sup>

Finally, Shannon employed two other major stylistic devices: *ecphonesis* and *repetition*. Adding passionate emphasis to the remarks, *ecphonesis* can be seen in expressions such as "I pray you," "nay more," and "how important."<sup>70</sup> The best example of repetition, specifically anaphora, occurred in the conclusion as Shannon spoke in the first person plural and sought to end on a climactic note:

It is, therefore, vain to imagine, it is suicidal to hope. . . .

Let us then, fellow-citizens, be united, be vigilant. Let us

husband our resources. . . Let us hope for the best, and

prepare for the worst.<sup>71</sup>

Press reaction (see chapter six) particularly criticized the highly emotive language in the speech. While the extant texts reveal no profanity, the speeches are replete with accusations so explicitly worded that certain readers were offended. In a detailed analysis of obscenities, Joel Feinberg lists four ways that speakers may cause offense: 1) through vulgar reference, 2) through vivid description, intensification, and colorful speech, 3) through expressions of strong

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<sup>66</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 30.

<sup>67</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 16, 18, 24.

<sup>68</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 9.

<sup>69</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 7, 8.

<sup>70</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 6, 7, 17, 18.

<sup>71</sup> Shannon, "Domestic Slavery," 32.

feeling, and 4) through invective.<sup>72</sup> Shannon's language may be said to have been characterized by all but the first of these. As Feinberg observed: "Insults are signs that the normal constraints of civility have been lifted, and thus they are warnings that violent consequences might follow."<sup>73</sup> From Shannon's perspective, the extreme language sounded a warning and rallying call and gave no offense to those "enlightened" on the issue.

### Summary

Any rhetorical theory must first be grounded in praxis; hence, the intensive examination of peripheral cues which occurred in chapter five. If proceeding in a regimented fashion, chapter five attempted to discover the various ethical, emotional, and stylistic acts that Shannon performed to win favor from his audiences.

In his attempts to establish credibility in the selected speeches, Shannon performed the following acts: 1) expressed intellectual honesty, 2) affirmed biblical authority in both speeches, 3) stressed fairness, 4) claimed honorable motives, 5) assailed the character of abolitionists in both speeches, 6) shared compelling reasons to speak, 7) portrayed himself as a victim 8) claimed logical superiority, and 9) evidenced restraint. While most of the appeals likely contributed to the acceptance of Shannon's ideas and enhanced credibility, his appeals to fairness and restraint lacked believability in light of his remarks concerning the abolitionists.

Appealing to his listeners' emotions, Shannon depicted the abolitionists as irrational, ignorant and/or prejudiced, blasphemous, and as rebellious; whereas, slaveholders were pictured as blessed, patriotic, and altruistic. In both speeches, Shannon relied heavily on emotional appeals as he sought to: 1) evoke anger and dismay, 2) arouse religious contempt, 3) appeal to patriotism, and 4) stir feelings of altruism in his listeners. He used the last appeal only in the Missouri speech, and it was not extensively developed there.

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<sup>72</sup> Joel Feinberg, The Moral Limits of the Criminal Law: Offense to Others, Vol. II (New York: Oxford UP, 1985) 190-248.

<sup>73</sup> Feinberg 222-223.

Shannon used correct language throughout both speeches. His language was highly ambiguous in the Kentucky speech and was vague in the Missouri speech when discussing how anti-abolitionists should act in concert. Both speeches were replete with emotive language and rhetorical figures which had the potential of adding energy to the delivery, making the speech memorable, regaining audience attention, establishing authorial presence, and proving role sincerity. Specifically, Shannon relied heavily on antithesis and rhetorical questions in the Kentucky speech; in the Missouri speech, he again utilized rhetorical questions but provided more imagery. Other stylistic acts that occurred in both speeches included: litotes, repetition, synonymy, ecphrasis, imperatives, polysyndeton, asyndeton, alliteration, and assonance.

Assuming that Shannon attempted to reach different audiences through each speech, how can ethical, emotional, and stylistic acts be said to have assisted role duality? Shannon's heavy use of character assaults and emotional material suggested that his intended audiences were not the undecided and obviously not the abolitionists, but pro-southern auditors. The ethical-emotional tie evidenced in Shannon's portrayal of the abolitionists likewise underscored the key role that the "enemy" played in the speeches. Anyone highly elaborating the arguments of the speech likely had strong reservations about the accusations Shannon made. Staunch abolitionists, who had no intention of analyzing the arguments were likely appalled at the speech acts. Those, however, already holding similar views and who comprised Shannon's intended audiences, likely identified with the material.

## Effects, Summaries, and Reflections

### CHAPTER 6

Proslavery writers and thinkers are still seen as pathetic figures in southern or American society. And although some historians have now come to associate proslavery in some manner with conservative social and political thinking about the American republic, the relationship is still viewed as aberrational.<sup>1</sup>

If considered aberrational today, how were Shannon's remarks regarded in his day? Chapters four and five have considered the *inherent* perlocutionary effects of acceptance and/or nonacceptance based upon logical, ethical, and emotional acts. In this final chapter, *consecutive* perlocutionary effects are considered. As mentioned earlier, these consecutive effects may be regarded as "optimal effects" and include press reaction to the speeches, student enrollment, contributions to Bacon College or Christian University, and job offers.

#### Optimal Effects

Delivered initially in 1844 and then reprinted in 1849, the Kentucky speech carried the potential of evoking two sets of optimal effects. In 1844 Bacon College faced a financial crisis and the possibility of closing. Obviously, the school needed an increase in enrollment and an increase in contributed funds. Furthermore, Shannon and other faculty members faced financial obligations themselves; without additional support for the school, their resignations were imminent.

Student enrollment in 1839, before Shannon came, totaled 63 students. By 1845 that number had risen to 113 and to 180 in 1847.<sup>2</sup> Enrollment books showed that most students came

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<sup>1</sup> Tise 8.

<sup>2</sup> Dwight E. Stevenson, The Bacon College Story: 1836-1865 (Lexington, KY: The College of the Bible, 1962) 18-19.

from Kentucky. Other students came from Mississippi, Virginia, and Louisiana; after 1844 increasing numbers came from Tennessee, Alabama, and Missouri.<sup>3</sup> In addition to attendance increases from Southern states, contributions to the school increased momentarily in 1845 as a show for support for Shannon. Shannon, who had offered his resignation, was compelled to remain at Bacon College as the following public circular announced:

It is known that Mr. Shannon, after having made great sacrifices... had at length, been compelled by a sense of duty, to resign the Presidency in consequence of the continued embarrassed condition of the finances. But influenced in part by very powerful and unequivocal manifestations of public sentiment...the Christian Congregation...has, with praise-worthy liberality, stepped forward and aided the Trustees in retaining this accomplished, energetic and successful Instructor.<sup>4</sup>

Whether or not the above increases can be directly tied to the speech is debatable. More obvious was the reaction from a congregation in Cincinnati that banned Shannon from the pulpit because of his pro-slavery views.<sup>5</sup> Although the congregation later rescinded the ban, it became apparent that Shannon had earned a reputation as a pro-slavery spokesperson.<sup>6</sup> D. S. Burnet, a leading church editor, described the essay in private circles as "prostituting the Bible to an unholy cause" and remarked that he heard many brethren in Kentucky express the wish that it had

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<sup>3</sup> Bacon College Enrollment Book, Transylvania University Archives, Lexington, KY.

<sup>4</sup> Bacon College Circular, 18 Aug. 1845, U of MO Archives, Lewis Hall, Columbia, MO.

<sup>5</sup> Christian Journal 3 (1844): 530-533; 612-613; 794; 830-832.

<sup>6</sup> James Shannon, letter to D. S. Burnet, 19 Feb. 1845, U of MO Archives, Lewis Hall, Columbia, MO; D. S. Burnet, letter to James Shannon, 3 Mar. 1845, U. of MO Archives, Lewis Hall, Columbia, MO. Burnet was responsible for rescinding the pulpit ban, but urged Shannon to preach the gospel and not opinion when he next came to Cincinnati. Burnet described himself as being "between two fires" and as believing that "ultraists on the subject are wrong on both sides."

never been written.<sup>7</sup> Later, when John G. Fee<sup>8</sup> characterized various church positions on slavery, he quoted Shannon whom he regarded as standing "quite eminent" among the "Reformed Baptists."<sup>9</sup>

As Shannon's second five year term as president of Bacon College ended, he republished the emended and expanded essay in 1849. The prospects for Bacon College were no brighter, and Shannon began searching for a new position. After a visit to Missouri, he began corresponding with officials at Columbia concerning the presidency at the university. The republication of the essay might have influenced University of Missouri curators, most of whom held pro-slavery views. Viewed from this standpoint, the republished essay possibly served as an example of scholarly work that would find acceptance by southern educators and hopefully open the door for job offers. While no extant evidence necessarily substantiated such a conjecture, it is not without merit. As Drew Gilpin Faust commented:

Because a society is least tolerant of nonconformity in times of crisis, it is often--paradoxically--in such periods that intellectual criticisms become most fully articulated. . . . Between 1840 and 1860, intellectuals in the South confronted just such a situation. As violent conflict with the North approached, Southerners exhibited decreasing patience with individuals whose primary allegiance was to abstract and disinterested speculation. Because they lived in a society that on the whole regarded their intellectual commitments as frivolous, men of mind in the Old South were forced to explore the nature of their relationship to their region to explain and

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<sup>7</sup> D. S. Burnet, letter to James Shannon.

<sup>8</sup> A noted Kentucky minister who attended the emancipation meeting in the spring prior to the Constitutional Convention of 1849.

<sup>9</sup> John G. Fee, Non-Fellowship with Slaveholders: The Duty of Christians (New York: John A. Gray, Printer, 1851) 25.

to justify their role.<sup>10</sup>

During Shannon's tenure at the University of Missouri attendances rose dramatically in the first three years: from 80 in 1850 to 124 in 1851, 143 in 1852, and 180 in 1853. The last three years decreased just as dramatically: 150 in 1854, 129 in 1855, and 112 in 1856.<sup>11</sup> College historian Jonas Viles noted a sharp rise in out-of-state students during Shannon's administration: "The large out of state enrollment suggests that perhaps the attacks of Shannon's opponents attracted parents who regarded the University as a denominational institution 'sound on the goose' as to Southern Rights."<sup>12</sup> Whether Shannon's dabbling in politics hindered or helped the state university is debatable, but a correlation between increased political involvement and enrollment decreases during the years 1854-1856 should be noted.

Press reaction to Shannon's 1855 pro-slavery speech was extremely harsh. Regrettably, extant primary resources reveal only the "free-soil" perspective. The Missouri Statesman led the attack on Shannon:

[I]t was the most violent effort we ever heard by any man on any subject--a speech far more distinguished for epithet and denunciation than for learning and eloquence. . . . From beginning to end it was an unbroken flood of denunciations the most rapacious; of epithets the most vindictive.<sup>13</sup>

Traveling to and from Lexington, Missouri, the site of the pro-slavery convention, Shannon delivered essentially the same speech numerous times. At Springfield, Missouri,

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<sup>10</sup> Drew Gilpin Faust, A Sacred Circle: The Dilemma of the Intellectual in the Old South, 1840-1860 (Philadelphia: U of PA Press, 1977) x.

<sup>11</sup> Jonas Viles, The University of Missouri: A Centennial History 1839-1939 (Columbia, MO: E W Stephens Co., 1939) 69.

<sup>12</sup> Viles 71.

<sup>13</sup> "President Shannon's Pro-Slavery Speech," The Missouri Statesman 30 June 1855.



Shannon's presence and request to speak on the subject at the Christian Church reportedly "broke up" a revival that had been in progress. It was regarded by the Democratic paper as "a very good speech of the kind, but entirely out of place and out of time."<sup>14</sup>

At the convention, itself, one-fourth of the counties voted against endorsing Shannon's speech. As James H. Moss, convention delegate, stated:

Sir, whilst I admired the research exhibited by the gentleman's speech . . . and whilst I endorse that portion of the speech . . . I yet disapprove and condemn a great portion of his speech, because I believe that opinions are therein contained and sentiments therein expressed, which, if this convention shall endorse by the passage of the resolutions now under consideration, will not only destroy the union and harmony of this convention, but will sow the seeds of discord throughout the State, and create a breach between the friends of slavery that can never be healed.<sup>15</sup>

Moss' sentiments were shared by the New Orleans' Bulletin which regarded Shannon's extreme language as offensive as William Lloyd Garrison's.<sup>16</sup> E. Curtis Davis, editor of the St. Joseph Cycle, had many favorable comments concerning the speech, but likewise saw it as detrimental to the Southern cause. Davis' chief complaint was that Shannon's denial of Congress' power to legislate slavery in the territories was not shared by all southerners. He added, "The true course, we humbly think, is to present this exciting subject in such an aspect as to produce no division

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<sup>14</sup> "President Shannon," Lancel (Springfield, MO) 28 July 1855.

<sup>15</sup> "Mr. Moss' Remarks," The Missouri Statesman 10 Aug. 1855.

<sup>16</sup> "Fanaticism Run Mad," Bulletin (New Orleans, LA) 1855. Reported in The Missouri Statesman 14 Sept. 1855.

among pro-slavery men, for undoubtedly as [many] sound Southern men admit the power as deny it."<sup>17</sup>

When the fall legislative session commenced, Shannon's political involvement became an issue. Spearheaded by James Rollins, the legislature passed a resolution that banned preaching by faculty members and vacated the board of trustees, faculty, and presidency effective 4 July 1856.<sup>18</sup> Shannon continued to preach without remuneration the remainder of the school year and was the subject of three installments in The Missouri Statesman entitled, "President Shannon and his Discourse upon the Subject of Slavery."<sup>19</sup> Despite re-election by the new board of trustees, Shannon declined for reasons attributed to his desire to preach; whereupon, the trustees conferred upon him an honorary doctorate.

Within a month, Shannon had accepted the presidency of Christian University in Canton, Missouri. Almost immediately he accompanied D. Pat Henderson, president of the board of trustees, on a southern tour to raise endowment funds. Their principal stop was New Orleans, home of future trustee member A. C. Bullitt. The New Orleans Daily Picayune portrayed the efforts of Shannon and Henderson in a very favorable light and indicated that A. C. Bullitt had endowed a chair; to endow a chair required a \$25,000 gift. The article additionally mentioned Baton Rougean, C. G. McHatton's interest in the college.<sup>20</sup> Besides raising funds for the school, Shannon and Henderson were also recruiting students and were quick to point out that "there is no point more eligible in the whole West for Southern parents, having children to educate, to build

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<sup>17</sup> "President Shannon," Cycle (St. Joseph, MO) 1855. Reported in The Missouri Statesman 31 Aug. 1855.

<sup>18</sup> The Missouri Statesman 30 Nov. 1855. The bill passed 69-47 in the House and 18-13 in the Senate.

<sup>19</sup> The Missouri Statesman 25 Jan. 1856; 8 Feb. 1856.

<sup>20</sup> Daily Picayune (New Orleans, LA) 15 July 1856. Bullitt and his mother-in-law, evidently Mrs. Irene Smith, jointly endowed the chair.

summer residence."<sup>21</sup> Henderson's winning ways and Shannon's stance on slavery and states' rights combined to make a successful tour.

Returning to Canton in mid-August, Shannon devoted most of his time to fund-raising. In December of 1856 Shannon and Henderson again toured the South seeking support for the school.<sup>22</sup> They naturally turned South for a number of reasons: 1) members of the Churches of Christ were concentrated in the region, 2) wealthy planters were better able to give large endowment sums, 3) both Henderson and Shannon had contacts in the South, and 4) the slavery issue in the North hindered fund-raising efforts. Indeed, North-Western Christian Magazine, a brotherhood abolitionist paper founded in Cincinnati in 1854, constantly ridiculed southern preachers for upholding slavery:

What can we expect of the great mass of our brethren at the south when such men as President Shannon, Elder J. B. Ferguson, and others who are or have been conspicuous in our ranks, are writing and publishing in defence of the "peculiar institution."<sup>23</sup>

Even Alexander Campbell, perhaps the leading voice in Churches of Christ of the period, was increasingly compelled to turn to the South when seeking funds for Bethany College. By embarrassing coincidence, Shannon and Campbell both were in New Orleans in early March of 1857. Learning that Shannon and Henderson had preceded his arrival by some weeks, Campbell wrote:

I was informed by them [Shannon and Henderson] on my arrival

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<sup>21</sup> "Christian University," Millennial Harbinger (1856): 228.

<sup>22</sup> The Missouri Statesman 5 Dec. 1856. This long tour possibly stretched into May: T. M. Allen, letter to Alexander Campbell, 3 June 1857, recorded in the Millennial Harbinger (1857): 417. Allen mentioned Shannon "who had just returned from a long Southern tour."

<sup>23</sup> "How Can Slavery Be Abolished," North-Western Christian Magazine I (1855): 323.

that they had contemplated and announced their design of making such an effort, before they heard of my contemplated visit. On these premises I declined making any ostensible effort, and therefore did not deliver a discourse upon the peculiar claims of Bethany College while in the city.<sup>24</sup>

From 1853 to 1856 approximately \$130,000 of a \$200,000 goal had been pledged to the school,<sup>25</sup> but then came the financial panic of 1857. Pledges made in more prosperous times turned to empty promises. By the end of 1857 the prospects of Christian University appeared bleak. Although the school would continue, Shannon's health began to fail. In 1858 he suffered a stroke and died, reportedly of asthma complications, in February of 1859.

Regrettably, when a fire destroyed the administration building of Christian University in 1903, all early financial and enrollment records were lost. Without these documents, particularly lists of contributors, one is hard pressed to prove that the Missouri speech significantly aided Shannon's fundraising efforts.

### Summaries

Educated in Ireland and having studied elocution under Sheridan Knowles, Shannon emerged as a capable speaker and diligent scholar. Early experiences with non-denominational and co-educational learning environments undergirded his later resolve to restore New Testament Christianity and to promote education for women. His review of religious teachings led him to leave the Presbyterian and Baptist churches and to identify with Churches of Christ. A similar introspective review of his objections to slavery, combined with the ownership of slaves through marriages, led Shannon to reverse his former opinions and defend the right to own slaves. Although

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<sup>24</sup> Alexander Campbell, "Notes on a Tour to the South," Millennial Harbinger (1857): 311.

<sup>25</sup> George L. Peters, Dreams Come True: A History of Culver-Stockton College (Canton, MO: Culver-Stockton College, 1941) 38-39.

Shannon preached extensively, his career centered around academia. An assistant in Carley's school in Atrim, Ireland, headmaster of Sunbury Academy and Richmond Academy, and professor of ancient languages at Athens, Georgia, Shannon was well prepared to preside over the College of Louisiana, Bacon College, University of Missouri at Columbia, and Christian University.

As president of Bacon College, Shannon delivered a lecture on slavery to the Franklin Society that was later published and widely circulated. Following its distribution Shannon was induced to remain as president for five more years. In 1849 the lecture was republished during the Kentucky Constitutional Convention debates over emancipation. Shortly thereafter, Shannon was offered the presidency of the University of Missouri at Columbia.

Shannon's tenure at Columbia was riddled with controversy surrounding his political and religious views. In 1855 he embarked on the lecture circuit and delivered at least sixteen pro-slavery speeches. At a pro-slavery convention in Lexington, Missouri, Shannon delivered an address on "Domestic Slavery" that was later published. One fourth of the delegates opposed the printing of the speech, the press reacted negatively, and the legislature passed a bill that vacated Shannon's position and forbade preaching by faculty. Although re-elected, Shannon declined the position, was awarded an honorary doctorate, and quickly accepted the presidency of Christian University in Canton, Missouri. That the embattled educator conducted such a vigorous campaign for slavery might, at first glance, be regarded as a political miscalculation since it alienated Shannon's enemies. Viewed differently, delegates emerged as the immediate audience, readers of the speech a wider, but highly polarized audience, and southerners willing to support Shannon constituting his intended audience. Two successful southern tours on behalf of Christian University tended to support the latter conclusion.

A rhetorical analysis of organization and logical appeals in the Kentucky speech revealed that Shannon advanced four major arguments to support his thesis that happiness can only be gained by adherence to God's laws. He argued that: 1) God's laws proclaim bondage to be just, 2) God positively decreed slavery to be good, 3) abolitionists oppose the teachings of God, and 4) abolitionists oppose the United States government and Constitution. Concerning organization, the

preface to the speech allowed Shannon to establish good will with more than his immediate audience. The speech could have benefitted from better transitions and previews. Although pro-slavery members of Shannon's immediate audience (in 1844 the Franklin Society), extended audience (readers), and intended audience (southerners) may have uncritically accepted his arguments, only the last argument, in the critic's estimation, was reasonably sound.

A rhetorical analysis of organization and logical appeals in the Missouri speech revealed that Shannon advanced the following theme: the economic, moral, natural, and Constitutional rights of slaveowners are threatened by growing abolitionist sentiment. In support of this theme, Shannon presented five arguments: 1) southerners will not consent to the abolition of slavery, 2) slavery is sanctioned by God, 3) bondage is a natural right of man, 4) property of slaveowners should be protected by the government, and 5) friends of the South and of the Constitution should unite. The last argument served also as Shannon's conclusion, since Shannon called upon his listeners to silence the voice of the abolitionists. The Missouri speech appeared to be more cogently organized than the Kentucky speech. Although the partisan slavery delegation may have identified with all five arguments, in the critic's estimation, Shannon failed to prove that slavery was sanctioned by God and that bondage was a natural right of man.

In his attempts to establish credibility in the selected speeches, Shannon performed the following acts: he 1) expressed intellectual honesty, 2) affirmed biblical authority in both speeches, 3) stressed fairness, 4) claimed honorable motives, 5) assailed the character of abolitionists in both speeches, 6) shared compelling reasons to speak, 7) portrayed himself as a victim, 8) claimed logical superiority, and 9) evidenced restraint. While most of the appeals likely contributed to the acceptance of Shannon's ideas and enhanced his credibility, the appeals to fairness and restraint lacked believability in light of his remarks concerning the abolitionists.

Appealing to his listeners' emotions, Shannon depicted the abolitionists as irrational, ignorant, prejudiced, blasphemous, and as rebellious; whereas slaveholders were pictured as blessed, patriotic, and altruistic. In both speeches, Shannon relied heavily on emotional appeals as he sought to 1) evoke anger and dismay, 2) arouse religious contempt, 3) appeal to patriotism,

and 4) stir feelings of altruism in his listeners. The last appeal occurred only in the Missouri speech and was not extensively developed.

Shannon used correct language and grammar throughout both speeches. His language was highly ambiguous in the Kentucky speech and was vague in the Missouri speech as to how anti-abolitionists should unite. Both speeches were replete with emotive language and rhetorical figures which had the potential of adding energy to the delivery, making the speech memorable, establishing authorial power, proving role sincerity, and appealing to listeners following the peripheral route to persuasion.

### Reflections

Two purposes were proposed from the beginning of this dissertation. One was to evaluate through rhetorical criticism the pro-slavery/ anti-abolitionist speeches of James Shannon. The second was to speculate further on the nature and function of role duality by analyzing Shannon's speeches. As with any research, certain assumptions have been made. To review these briefly, the following list is presented:

- I. Humans are role-takers. Speakers conform to role expectations and if need be create roles where expectations for performance are lacking.
- II. Highly defined rhetorical situations call for specific responses and require decisive statements from official spokespersons. Other situations are not so specific and numerous exigences may be present. In the latter case, the speaker may isolate the most salient role or attempt to meet all the exigences through role duality. Furthermore, speakers may deliberately violate role expectations for rhetorical effect.
- III. Rhetic speech acts, those expressing intention, may be considered performatives that lead to inherent and consequential effects. These acts involve logical appeals (intentional directedness), ethical appeals

(intentional sincerity), emotional appeals (intentional mood), and stylistic appeals (intentional manifest).<sup>26</sup>

IV. Audiences may be persuaded by the central or peripheral routes to persuasion.

The locus of intentionality resides within the auditor who elaborates the message. Audiences are role players, too, with identification with speaker claims dependent on individual willingness to accept the role. Audiences may short-circuit logical scrutiny and accept a speaker's claims solely on the basis of identification.

Any theory of persuasive communication must be grounded in praxis. Granted that one case does not a theory make, the study of role, Shannon's rhetorical choices, and the effects that followed the selected speeches were hoped to set certain parameters for role duality as a communication strategy: parameters that could later be modified through increased case studies. From the outset, the dissertation sought to determine 1) whether sufficient evidence existed to ascertain Shannon's intention in delivering the addresses, 2) whether Shannon's rhetorical choices could be said to constitute role duality, and 3) whether the means Shannon employed furthered his goals.

A preponderance of evidence pointed to the conclusion that Shannon harbored multiple intentions, and that while addressing an immediate audience, that he also had in mind reaching southerners who might help Bacon College or Christian University. Less clear was whether a discernible strategy accompanied that effort. Organization seemed to play an insignificant part in reaching contributors, undecided border state auditors, and potential employers. Based on the two speeches, roughly half of Shannon's arguments withstood logical rigor, seemingly indicating that Shannon was more concerned about identifying with southerners emotionally than logically convincing undecided border state auditors. Likewise, Shannon's heavy use of character assaults

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<sup>26</sup> Thomas Wetterstrom, Intention and Communication: An Essay in the Phenomenology of Language (Lund, Sweden: Doxa, 1977) 58-59; 199-203. Wetterstrom's categories appear to correlate reasonably well with the appeals mentioned.



and emotional material conveyed through stylistic appeals which helped establish authorial power, suggested that his primary audience was not the undecided, obviously not the abolitionists, but pro-slavery auditors.

As far as effectiveness is concerned, the 1844 version of the Kentucky speech momentarily raised morale for Bacon College; on the other hand, it marked Shannon as a pro-slavery orator among his religious brethren. The 1849 version may have helped Shannon win approval from the University of Missouri Board of Trustees, the majority of whom were slaveowners. The 1855 Missouri speech clearly showed Shannon's support for southern rights, but was met with severe press reaction and legislative action. Shannon did prove to be moderately effective in fundraising in the South, even though he was hampered by the financial crisis of 1857 and by ill health.

In relation to the three case scenarios (Isaiah, Reagan, and Hardie) mentioned in the first chapter, Shannon's speeches find similarity. First, **the rhetorical situation that accompanied each speech involved multiple roles.** As prophet, Isaiah asked his listeners to accept divine authority (inherent effect); as religious persuader, he asked his listeners to believe the vision (inherent effect); finally, as propagandist for Ahaz's policy, he urged his audience to support Ahaz (consecutive effect). As President of the United States, Reagan implicitly asked his audience to accept his authority (inherent effect); as after-dinner speaker, he wanted evangelicals to enjoy an evening (inherent effect); as negotiator, he wanted conservatives and the U.S.S.R. to believe his tough stance, for conservatives to rally behind him and for the U.S.S.R. to come to the bargaining table (consecutive effects). As an agitating Member of Parliament, Keir Hardie expected others to disapprove of his remarks (inherent effect); as violator of a social role, he hoped to insult and irritate (inherent effect); as uniter of the Labour Party, his words rallied support (consecutive effects). As college president/fund raiser, Shannon asked people to accept his authority (inherent effect) and to give (consecutive effect); as a debater, Shannon asked his audiences to accept or reject his claims (inherent effect); as a family provider, Shannon hoped for job offers or increased support (consecutive effects).

Second, in each situation, one role seemed to predominate. Based on principal intention, Isaiah emerged as a political propagandist (propaganda need not carry a negative connotation), Reagan as an negotiator, Hardie as a uniter, Shannon as a fund-raiser. Viewed in this light, speakers, despite multiple audiences, may opt to satisfy the expectations of their core constituency. Obviously, both historians and critics must be careful that their depictions of speakers accurately reflect the diversity of roles being played. The danger is that the critic or historian will so identify with one role, thus becoming a role player, that his or her judgment will reflect only that one perception. Perhaps effectiveness should be measured in a ratio. As a speaker, Shannon was a poor debater--based on the number of unsound arguments--and a moderate fund-raiser and family provider.

Third, the speaker manipulated the scene. Though addressing his remarks to Assyria, Isaiah actually meant Israel to hear them. Yes, Reagan addressed evangelicals in Florida, but certain remarks were intended to be carried by the news service. Hardie spoke to the House of Commons, but he intended for all of England to hear. Shannon spoke to the Franklin Society and to the delegates at the pro-slavery convention, but he also spoke to southern contributors. The deliberate manipulation raises ethical questions about role duality. Is one being deceptive by using an immediate audience and situation as a springboard for an intended audience? In some instances the immediate audience might take the action as a compliment. Evangelicals might have been pleased that Reagan spoke about foreign policy at their event. On the other hand, some delegates at the pro-slavery convention thought Shannon gave his personal feeling precedence to the goals of the convention.

Fourth, the speaker relied almost exclusively on the peripheral route to persuasion: on ethical and emotional appeals. For instance, Isaiah cursed Assyria, Reagan considered Russia "evil," Hardie spurned the royal family, and Shannon castigated the abolitionists. In each case, the speaker evidently sought to raise credibility by depicting the opposition as the "enemy." This emphasis on claims of value suggests that role duality is related to epideictic oratory. Less discernible was the function of logical appeals, organization, and style in

contributing to role duality: the analysis of Shannon's speeches suggested that logical appearance, loose structure, ambiguous language, and heavy use of ornamentation were strategies employed.

Equally important was the image of each speaker. In each speech, the speaker gambled that temporary lashback, resulting from the emotive language employed, would give way to greater acceptance. With Isalah, Reagan, and Hardie that seems to have occurred; with Shannon lashback seemed to outweigh advantages. Perhaps role duality should be seen as a strategy best reserved for desperate moments, for persons with high credibility, and for ceremonial occasions.

Furthermore, given the specious arguments Shannon presented and the severe criticism he met afterwards, one wonders about the degree of difficulty religious figures face when attempting to speak on political matters. Perhaps role duality may function best when rhetors who are expected to follow the central route (e.g. lawyers and legislators) instead appeal to the peripheral route of persuasion; similarly, rhetors accustomed to reliance on the peripheral route (e.g. preachers) may meet with success when occasionally opting for the central route. By violating expected style and rhetorical behavior, the rhetor is enabled to escape role confinement.

### Epilogue

Following Shannon's death, his friends contemplated a biography. Permission was secured from Mrs. Shannon, but then came the Civil War. By the end of the war Mrs. Shannon had died, and given the outcome of the war and Shannon's intense views on slavery the book never materialized.

Renewed attention, however, was given to Shannon's life as Culver-Stockton College (formerly Christian University) became more interested in its past. In 1962 the college named a dormitory in honor of its first president. It is hoped that this dissertation will contribute to a biographical work on Shannon, who like many pro-slavery spokespersons has been considered pathetic or aberrational. Henry H. White, one of Shannon's friends and admirers, grieved by Shannon's sudden death penned these words after the Civil War:

The ways of the Great Ruler are past finding out, but in the  
light of subsequent events in Missouri, I have since indulged the thought

that in this case the way is now apparent. If Pres. S. had been in Canton when the civil war was raging, his ardent nature would have led him to take a most decided stand for the side he deemed right, and this would have brought upon him the hostility of those opposed to his views, and a military prison, or possibly something worse might have been his fate. It seems to me that his removal by death, before the fratricidal strife had waxed warm, was in mercy a taking away from the evil to come.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Henry H. White, "Some Recollections of President James Shannon," n.d., Shannon Collection, Hargrett Library, U of Athens, GA.

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## **Appendix A**

### **ILLUSTRATIONS**

#### **Illustration 1**

James Shannon, ca. 38 years old. Shannon was 38 years old at the time of his second marriage. This miniature oil painting was accompanied by a miniature oil painting of his second wife. (Photo courtesy of Culver-Stockton College, Canton, MO).

#### **Illustration 2**

Frances Carey Moore Shannon, Shannon's second wife, ca. 20 years old. (Photo courtesy of Culver-Stockton College, Canton, MO).

#### **Illustration 3**

Medallion awarded Shannon in 1815 from the Royal Belfast Academical Institution (Photo courtesy of Culver-Stockton College, Canton, Missouri).

#### **Illustration 4**

College of Louisiana, Jackson, Louisiana. The west wing was built during Shannon's presidency in 1837 to match the pre-existing east wing. The administration building in the center was built after Shannon's presidency (Photo courtesy of Department of Culture, State of Louisiana).

#### **Illustration 5**

James Shannon, ca. 45 years old, while president of Bacon College (Photo courtesy of Transylvania University Archives, Lexington, KY).

#### **Illustration 6**

Bacon College, Harrodsburg, Kentucky (Photo courtesy of Transylvania University Archives, Lexington, KY).

#### **Illustration 7**

Aspen Hall, Harrodsburg, Kentucky. Built ca. 1840.

**Illustration 8**

University of Missouri at Columbia during Shannon's presidency (Photo courtesy State Historical Society of Missouri).

**Illustration 9**

James Shannon, ca. 51. Bingham oil painting, University of Missouri at Columbia (Photo courtesy of State Historical Society of Missouri).

**Illustration 10**

James Shannon, ca. 56. President of Christian University (Photo courtesy of State Historical Society of Missouri).

**Illustration 11**

Christian University during Shannon's presidency (Photo courtesy of State Historical Society of Missouri).



Illustration 1





Illustration 2

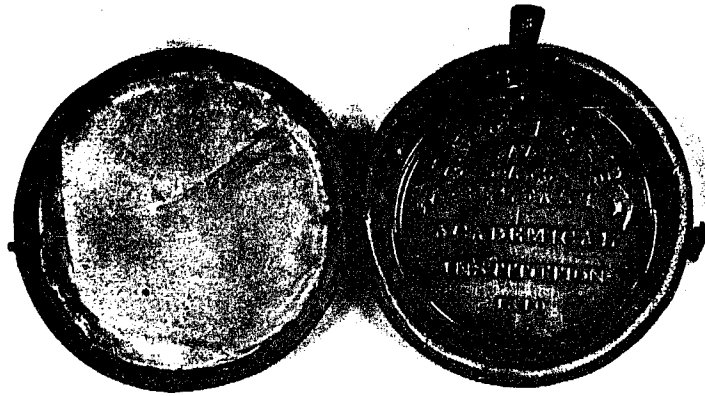


Illustration 3



Illustration 4



Illustration 5



Illustration 6



Illustration 7



Illustration 8

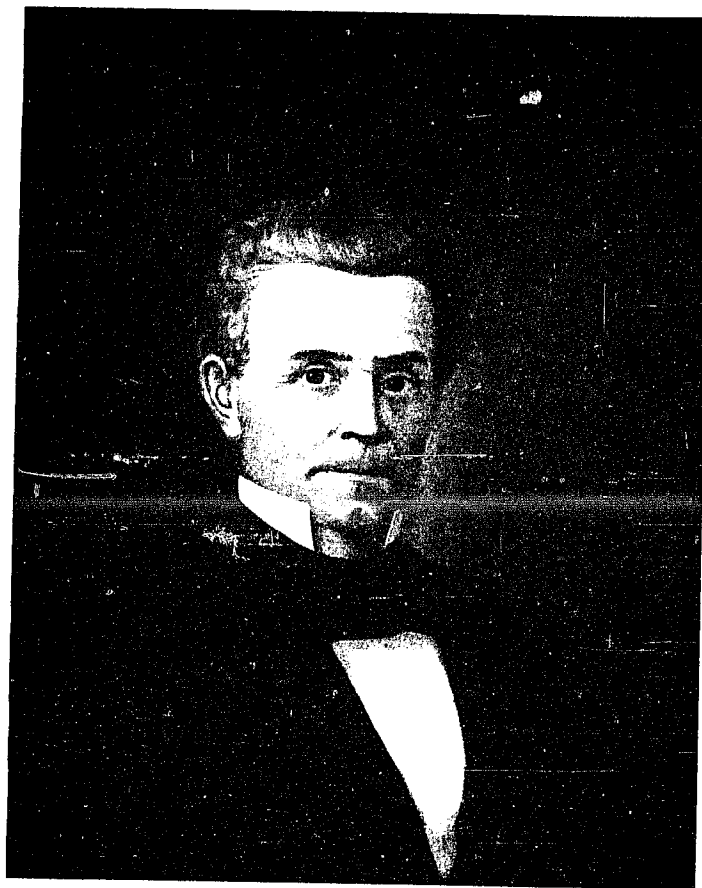


Illustration 9



Illustration 10



Illustration 11

Appendix B  
THE KENTUCKY SPEECH

PHILOSOPHY OF SLAVERY,

AS IDENTIFIED WITH THE

PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN HAPPINESS;

AN ESSAY,

BY

JAMES SHANNON,  
PRESIDENT OF BACON COLLEGE,  
HARRISBURG, KENTUCKY.

---

"PROVE ALL THINGS. HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

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FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY  
A. G. HODGES & Co. Printers  
1849



## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

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The Author of the following pages, when a youth, was constitutionally, and by education, intensely opposed to Domestic Slavery. A prayerful and protracted examination of the Bible, however, on that subject, left him no alternative, but to abandon his *prejudices* or become an infidel. From his earliest years, he has been fully convinced, that *God cannot look upon sin with allowance*; that the Bible is the only infallible standard of Moral Truth and Human Duty; and that where our views and feelings conflict with Bible doctrine, we must become fools in our own estimation, if we would be truly wise. To the mind of the Author, the following reflections, for several years before they were published, had fully justified the wisdom and goodness of God in reference to the institution of hereditary bondage. He claims nothing of the reader, however, but a candid examination of the argument, and a ready acquiescence in the paramount authority of God's Book. In consenting to a re-publication of the Essay, he has been influenced, in part, by the estimate set upon it by some, who formerly were, and by others who still are, opposed to its sentiments. Had anti-slavery men been satisfied to advocate Emancipation on grounds of *expediency*, without assailing the lawfulness of the institution, and the moral and religious character of their opponents, this Essay, perhaps, had never seen the light. So far as he knows himself, his sole object is to do good.

BACON COLLEGE, JULY 12, 1849.

# THE PHILOSOPHY OF SLAVERY,

AS IDENTIFIED WITH

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN HAPPINESS:

*An Address, by PRESIDENT SHANNON, to the Franklin Society of Bacon College, delivered in the College Chapel on the 27th of June, 1844, and published by request of the Society. Re-published, with additions and emendations, by request of the Students of Bacon College, as well as of many citizens, who, at various times, have solicited its re-publication.*

### YOUNG GENTLEMEN—MEMBERS OF THE FRANKLIN SOCIETY:

Having been honored by your partiality with the privilege of addressing you on the present occasion, permit me to offer you a few thoughts on the Philosophy of Slavery, as identified with the Philosophy of Human Happiness.

It will hardly be doubted by any sane mind, that happiness is the end and aim of our being. All men are impelled, at all times, and by every principle of their nature, to seek this invaluable treasure, without which all things else would be utterly valueless, and even life itself an intolerable burden. Nay, more—I maintain, that no rational or even sentient being ever did, or ever could, voluntarily undergo a single pang of misery for its own sake. Many, in all ages, have no doubt subjected themselves, of their own free will, to privation and unhappiness in various forms, with the hope of avoiding thereby a greater evil, or of securing a greater good. But, that any human being could possibly be regardless of happiness, and alike insensible to pleasure or pain—or that he could be capable of voluntary action in such a state of insensibility, will be credited by no person who understands the philosophy of the human mind, or the principles that control human conduct.

By the very necessity of our organization, we seek happiness in all that we do. The Bible itself never, in a single instance, contravenes, but, on the contrary, harmonizes in all respects with these principles. Hence, in order to attain to the highest virtue, we are required and even obliged to pursue the path

that leads directly and infallibly to the greatest enjoyment. And it may safely be affirmed, that every precept and prohibition of Christianity, from first to last, tends no less to increase the happiness of him who fears God and keeps his commandments, than it does to promote his virtue and secure the Divine favor.

But, though all men are unceasingly engaged in the pursuit of happiness, no person can have failed to observe, that all are not equally successful; and that none is perfectly successful at all times.

Now, if it be asked, why so few obtain, in any considerable degree, that which all seek with untiring ardor—the answer is at hand. They seek it in a wrong way. A few reflections will make this apparent.

All our faculties, whether animal, intellectual, or moral, are designed, and have a natural tendency, when properly exercised, to promote the happiness of their possessor. But, when misapplied or perverted, they have an equal tendency to render him unhappy.

As an illustration of this sentiment, we may take the appetite for food. On a moment's reflection, it will be seen, that this appetite is designed by Infinite Wisdom and Benevolence for the production of our happiness. But, to attain this desirable end, we must gratify it in harmony with all the laws of our nature. If these laws be violated in its gratification, there necessarily results a measure of unhappiness proportioned to the magnitude of the transgression—in some instances involving the most excruciating misery, and even the loss of life. The same principle is applicable to all our faculties. Each is productive of happiness or misery, just so far, and only so far, as it is exercised in harmony with the laws of our nature, or in violation of those laws—that is to say, in harmony with, or in opposition to, the will of God.

If these sentiments be true, (and true they most undoubtedly are,) then it follows, of necessity, that all the untold sufferings of the human family originate in the perversion of their faculties, and in the transgression of those laws, the observance of which was designed and calculated to render them happy.

Nor does this doctrine conflict with the unquestionable fact, that we inherit a vitiated organization, which exposes us to

suffering, independently of any violation of the laws of nature on our part. For, trace the disorder as far back as you please, you must ultimately arrive at a transgression of law, which is the original and sole cause of this disorder, and of all the misery consequent thereon. In confirmation of this view, it must be manifest to every reflecting mind, that the healthy and legitimate action of every faculty pertaining to the human race tends only to happiness; and, consequently, that all the unhappiness that is on earth must have resulted, either immediately or remotely, from violated law, and the effects produced thereby.

Now, if these principles be correct, it is manifest, that a course of conduct in perfect harmony with all the laws under which we are placed by the Author of our existence, would necessarily result in the production of the highest happiness of which we are capable. But such a course of conduct of necessity involves a knowledge of those laws, and a disposition to regulate all our actions in accordance with that knowledge.

Hence, the main and the only insuperable barriers to human happiness are, *ignorance of law*, and *insubordination to its authority*. It is hardly necessary to add, that such is the Bible method of explaining the origin of human suffering. And it may be fearlessly asserted, that every other method of explaining it, is in the highest degree unphilosophical and absurd.

It must be remembered, that we are not inquiring here, what provision is necessary to justify the Moral Governor of the Universe in pardoning those who have rebelled against his authority? That would be to view the subject as a Theologian, and not as a Philosopher—in which latter capacity alone, do I now desire to consider it.

The case, then, as disclosed in the Bible, and confirmed by Philosophy, stands simply thus:—When man first came out of the hands of his Maker, he was perfectly happy; but was, nevertheless, so organized, that the continuance of his happiness was made absolutely to depend on his continued observance of all the laws under which he was placed. He violated those laws, and became miserable. And from this first violation, and other similar violations of law, has originated all the unhappiness that has ever been in the world. Nor is it possible that man can ever be restored to that happiness from which

he has fallen, except in harmony with these principles. For, as it is manifest, that self-will and insubordination to law have produced all the misery that exists on earth, it is obvious that the removal of those fruitful sources of mischief is indispensable to the happiness of men even in this world. Hence, *the destruction of self-will, and the cultivation of a law-abiding spirit*, involves our greatest good, and is identified with human salvation, both in time and in eternity.

These preliminary considerations may assist us in understanding what might otherwise appear dark in the moral government of God; whilst they prepare us for the farther discussion, and for a more intelligent conception of our subject, viz: *The Philosophy of Slavery, as identified with the Philosophy of Human Happiness.*

For the purpose, however, of avoiding misconception, before we proceed with our argument, we wish it to be distinctly understood, that we presume not to correct the aberrations, or supply the deficiencies of God's word by an appeal to human wisdom. We regard the Bible as *the only infallible standard of moral truth and human duty*. Nor can we regard that individual as having learned even the alphabet of divine wisdom, who is not fully convinced, that even "the foolishness of God is wiser than men." When God speaks, we consider it the part of true wisdom to hear reverently, believe implicitly, and obey with unwavering fidelity; not daring to presume to be wiser than God—to condemn what God has not condemned, or to justify what God has not justified. We repudiate, as the quintessence of infidelity, the sentiment, that men are able, by any power of intellect, or by any "*feeling away down in the heart*," to prove that to be wrong which the Bible sanctions.

Hence, should our *philosophy*—our mode of explaining the reasonableness of the Bible doctrine—be wholly unsatisfactory to our readers, we nevertheless claim, that the weakness of our intellect shall not be allowed, in any degree, to disparage the paramount authority of divine revelation. With this explanatory digression let us return to the argument.

We have already seen, that all the misery on earth originated in self-will, prompting to the violation of law; and that the salvation of men, both in time and in eternity, is absolutely identified with the destruction of this lawless spirit. Hence,

those circumstances, and that discipline, are best for each individual, which are best calculated to subdue self-will, and to cultivate a spirit of subordination to lawful authority.

In accordance with these views, so soon as our first parents, yielding to the impulse of passion and self-will, disobeyed the laws of their Creator, that All-wise and Infinitely-good Being, *benevolently instituted various grades of bondage*, not more for the punishment, than for the cure of sin, and the removal of its sad consequences. The woman, being first in the transgression, and having beguiled the man, is put in bondage to his authority. She refused to hold her desires in subjection to the will of God, and, therefore, Jehovah decreed, "*thy desire shall be (subject) to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.*" Gen. iii. 16. The New Testament confirms this decree, as follows: "*Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and he is the Saviour of the body. Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let wives be unto their own husbands in every thing.*" Eph. v. 22-24.

The wide spreading contempt for this statute, exhibited by the politico-religious fanaticism and infidelity of the age, is one of the most alarming symptoms of approaching anarchy, and the speedy overthrow of our liberties. The attempt, which is being made in these United States, to elevate the wife to a *political equality* with her husband, or to change in any respect the relation established between them by God himself is rank infidelity, no matter what specious disguise it may assume; and it cannot fail to be replete with mischief to both parties, and to the best interests of the family, the State, and the Church. For the *punishment*, then, as well as for the *cure* of her sin, she was put in bondage to her husband. And, though infidel fanaticism may blaspheme, enlightened Christian philanthropy will always say amen, to the divine statute.

But, as there was no created being on earth, to which man could be made subject, he was *put in bondage to nature*, and to the stern and unbending necessity of the circumstances by which he was surrounded. And, for the purpose of rendering that bondage the more intense and effective, the earth was cursed with sterility for his sake, with the intent that he might be compelled, in conformity with his sentence of condemna-

tion, to eat his bread in the sweat of his face, and under the lash of an imperious and inexorable necessity. This bondage, too, as may be seen even by the most superficial, has proved to be an incalculable blessing; thereby illustrating the divine wisdom and benevolence in which it originated, notwithstanding the vain attempts of men in all ages to set it aside by practical abolition.

In pursuance of the same benevolent purpose to arrest the ruinous tendency of ignorance and self-will, children were placed in bondage to their parents; and it was enacted by the law of Moses, that the stubborn and rebellious son, who would not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, should be stoned to death. Deut. xxi. 18-21. Christianity is no less explicit in enjoining filial obedience, although under different sanctions. And Paul assures us, "that the heir, as long as he is a minor, differs nothing from a *bond-man*," (for so "*doulos*," the word used in the original undoubtedly imports, and so McKnight translates it,) "though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors, until the time appointed of the father." Gal. iv. 1, 2. All nations, in all ages, (not even excepting Mahometans and Pagans,) have, with one united testimony, confirmed the wisdom and benevolence of this decree, which places children in subjection to the physical discretionary control of parents and guardians, during the period of their minority.

If the reason of this universal agreement be inquired into, it will no doubt be found in the universal conviction, that, during the period of minority, as a general rule, the animal propensities are too strong, and the intellect and the moral sentiments too feebly developed, to render it safe or prudent to trust youth with the reins of self-government. Thus far, then, at least, we have the universal consent of mankind, in harmony with the word of God, that some are incapable of making a proper use of freedom; and, that, for all such, bondage is a blessing, and freedom an unmitigated calamity.

There is another point, which it is important to notice before leaving this part of our subject. Under the law of Moses, the Gentiles residing in the land of Judea, and in the surrounding States, were permitted, by express statute of Jehovah, to sell their children to the Hebrews to be the bond-servants of them, and of their children after them, *forever*. Lev. xxv. 44-46. More of this, however, in another place.

We will now examine the teachings of the Old Testament on the subject of

#### DOMESTIC SLAVERY.

Whether the institution of hereditary, domestic servitude, as it exists among us, was established before the flood, we are not informed. Certain it is, however, that it existed with the divine sanction very soon after that event.

The first recognition of domestic slavery found in the Bible, is in Gen. ix. 25-27. "And Noah said, cursed be Canaan; *a servant of servants* shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant." All the Commentators that I have had an opportunity of examining, (Gill, Henry, Horne, Clarke, &c., &c.,) with one united voice, bear witness, that the posterity of Canaan is here adjudged to the relation of bond-servants to the posterities of Shem and Japheth.

It will not do for the abolitionist to nullify the obvious meaning of this passage by asserting, that Noah merely predicts the future history of the three families, without involving the divine sanction of slavery. When did God, either in the Old Testament or the New, predict a *wicked act*, and, at the same time, without any mark of his displeasure, pronounce the most emphatic blessings upon the *wicked actor*? Piety and common sense revolt at the idea. And, yet, nothing can possibly be more explicit or emphatic than the divine blessing here pronounced on Shem and Japheth, *in the character of SLAVEHOLDERS*. Hence it avails but little, if any thing, in the argument, whether this passage be understood to *institute*, or merely to *predict*, domestic slavery. The slaveholders are distinctly and emphatically blessed of God; and not "*God-aborred*," as modern abolitionists impudently and impiously assert.

That this decree of Jehovah took immediate effect in the establishment of domestic slavery, and that the institution spread with great rapidity, is proved incontestibly by the following well authenticated historical fact: When the war of the nine Kings occurred in the vale of Siddim, there were found among Abram's servants, born in his house, no less than 318 men, ca-



*public of bearing arms.* Gen. xiv. 14. From this fact we may reasonably infer that all the servants of Abram, including old men, women, and children, amounted in all probability to not less than 1,500 or 2,000. Now Abram was born 292 years after the flood, and as this war took place between his departure from Haran, when he was 75 years old, and the birth of Ishmael, when he was 86, it must have occurred between the two periods of 367 and 378 years after the deluge; so rapidly had the institution of domestic servitude grown up, not merely with the approbation of God, but even by his positive decree. As this distinguished captain and slaveholder returned from the slaughter of the Kings, Jehovah sent his servant, Melchisedec, to meet him in the way, and *bless him*. Could God have given a more manifest sanction of slavery—yes, and of war, too, under certain circumstances—than he has here done?

When this friend of God, this father of the faithful, was 99 years old, (391 years after the deluge,) God changed his name to Abraham, made a covenant with him, and stereotyped his approbation of domestic slavery by engraving it on that covenant, and incorporating it with the ordinance of Circumcision. Be silent and harken to the voice of God. "He that is born in thy house, and he that *is bought with thy money*, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for *an everlasting covenant*." Gen. xvii. 13.

About 430 years after this occurrence, when God was preparing to lead his chosen people out of the land of Egypt, and make them a great nation, he gave them the ordinance of the Passover, and engraved his approbation of *domestic slavery* on that also, as he had previously done on the ordinance of Circumcision. "And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, this is the ordinance of the Passover. There shall no stranger eat of it. But every man's servant, *that is bought for money*, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. A foreigner and *a hired servant* shall not eat thereof." Ex. xii. 43-45. Here, as elsewhere, there is a marked distinction between the *hireling* and the *slave*. To the *hired servant* the privilege was denied, but granted to the *slave*, of partaking of this ordinance of the Jewish religion.

Thus did Jehovah stereotype his approbation of domestic slavery by incorporating it with the ordinances of the Jewish

religion, the only religion on earth, that had the divine sanction from the calling of Abraham, 367 years after the deluge, till the introduction of Christianity, a period of more than 1900 years.

Nor is this all. When Jehovah had brought his chosen people out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, he gave them at Mount Sinai the law of the Ten Commandments, generally recognized throughout the civilized world, as the *Moral Law*, and incorporated in its provisions a distinct recognition of the principle, (so arrogantly denied by infidel abolitionism,) *that man may rightfully hold property in man*. Deluded fanatic, hear with reverence, if it is possible for you so to do, at least for one moment, the voice of God, speaking, (*not in the ceremonial*, but) in the MORAL LAW. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his *man-servant*, nor his *maid-servant*, nor his *ox*, nor his *ass*, nor anything that is thy neighbor's." Ex. xx. 17.

The character of the servants here spoken of is put beyond the possibility of a doubt in the statutes concerning circumcision and the passover. They are slaves, *home-born*, or *bought with money*, as contra-distinguished by God himself from *hired servants*.

Here, then, *the right of property in slaves* is as sacredly guarded, and the violation of that right as distinctly prohibited by Jehovah, as is possible to be done. In the name of reason, then, what blindness must have taken hold of men's minds, or what wickedness possessed their hearts, when they madly urge on a fanatical and infuriated mass to a system of *wholesale robbery*, in direct violation of the tenth commandment!

\* If it can be satisfactorily proved, that the good of the State demands, that involuntary servitude shall be abolished, let it be done *honestly*, *HONORABLY*—and not as the highwayman possesses himself of the traveler's purse. The State has no more right than the highwayman to take private property for the public good, without full compensation to the owner.†

(\*) When this essay was re-published, the right of the State, by a bare majority of the legal voters, to emancipate slaves, *without compensation* to their owners, was being warmly advocated in the canvass for the election of members to a Convention to amend the Constitution of the State of Kentucky. This circumstance will account for some paragraphs found in this edition of the essay, that were not introduced into the first edition.

(†) Although no intelligent man, unless blinded by prejudice, will contest the foregoing principle; nevertheless, for the sake of the ignorant, and those that are slow of apprehension, it may not be amiss to investigate it in this place.

And the man who unites with a million to take away his neighbors's house, his *man-servant*, his *maid-servant*, his ox, his ass, or anything that is his—unless it be done by the State, for the public necessity, and with full compensation to the owner, is as guilty of robbery, in the eye of the Decalogue, as if he had done the deed in his individual capacity.

It should be particularly noted, likewise, that this commandment goes much farther than to prohibit the violation of the right of property. This much had previously been done in the eighth commandment, viz: "Thou shalt not steal." The tenth

It is an admitted principle among standard writers on the nature and design of the social compact, that the very object of civil society and human government is to protect person and property. God wills, that private property shall be sacred and inviolable; and, therefore, he wills the existence of human government for its protection. Consequently, government has no more right than an individual to interfere with the right of property, except for the lawful purposes of government; and not even then without just compensation to the owner.

The Constitution of the United States distinctly recognizes this principle, and prohibits its violation, either by Congress or by the individual States. Art. I, sec. 10, clause 1, says, "No State shall pass any law impairing the obligation of contracts." Art. 5 of amendments says—"nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation."

We affirm, that these provisions of the Constitution fairly and fully cover (as they were indubitably designed to do) the whole of the ground for which we contend on this subject. And in support of this affirmation, we can produce the testimony of the standard writers on this subject, not only in America, but throughout the civilized world; and the decisions of the highest judicial authority in the United States.

Kent (in the 2d vol. of his Com., p. 339,) remarks thus: "The Constitution of the United States, and of most of the States of the Union, have imposed a great and valuable check upon the exercise of Legislative power, by declaring, that private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation. A provision for compensation is a necessary attendant on the due and constitutional exercise of the power of the lawgiver to deprive an individual of his property without his consent; and this principle, in American constitutional jurisprudence, is founded in natural equity, and is laid down by jurists as an acknowledged principle of universal law."

In support of the same doctrine, which he argues at considerable length, the learned Commentator refers, in a note, to *Grotius De Jure B. et P.* b. 3, ch. 19, sec. 7; *Puff. De Jure Nat. et Gent.* b. 8, ch. 5, sec. 3, 7; *Bynk. Quæst. Jur. Pub.* b. 2, ch. 15; *Vattel*, b. 1, ch. 20, sec. 244.

In the same note, Kent remarks: "The settled and fundamental doctrine is, that government has no right to take private property for public purposes, without giving a just compensation."

With reference to a judicial decision in N. C. the Commentator says, (p. 340:) "It is to be observed, that N. Carolina has no express provision, declaring, that private property shall not be taken for public uses without just compensation." But, though it be not a constitutional principle, yet the principle exists with stringent force, independent of any positive provision."

On page 340, Kent remarks, "It would be a violation of contract, and repugnant to the Constitution of the United States, to interfere with private property, except under the limitations which have been mentioned."

Mansfield, in his comments on the Constitution of the United States, takes the same ground, and maintains it triumphantly by referring to judicial decisions, where the only principle involved was, whether a State had the power (except within the limitations aforesaid,) to interfere with vested rights. We will quote a few paragraphs to the point:

goes farther than this, and prohibits the indulgence of even a *risk* to violate this right. Hence, the advocates of Emancipation without compensation to the owners, are involved in the deep guilt (whether successful or unsuccessful in their present efforts) of violating the tenth commandment, and exciting others to a similar violation. I am aware that they plead *not guilty* to the charge of violating the tenth commandment, because, as they allege, they do not desire to appropriate the property to their own use. A brief analysis of coveting will expose the fallacy of this argument, and the insufficiency of this plea.

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"The States cannot impair the *obligation of contracts*. This is one of the most important provisions of the Constitution, and has already occasioned much discussion, and been illustrated by several judicial decisions."

"Contracts may be either *executory* or *executed*."

"A *grant* and a contract *executed* are the same thing. A contract *executed* conveys a *thing in possession*. A contract *executory* conveys a *thing in action*."

"As the term, contract, in the Constitution, is not limited, it signifies both contracts *executed* and *executory*. A *grant*, therefore, is such a contract as cannot be impaired by the States. Such was the decision in *Fletcher vs. Peck*. There the State of Georgia had granted away certain lands to Peck, who had conveyed them to Fletcher for a valuable consideration; subsequent to which the State of Georgia cancelled their grant to Peck. Fletcher sued on the covenant of *warranty*, and the Court held, that the law cancelling the grant was unconstitutional, because *impairing a contract*, which had already vested in Fletcher a right to the land."—*Polit. Gr.*, par. 250, 252, 254, 257.

The intelligent reader will not fail to observe, that the question involved in this case is simply—Are the States inhibited by the Constitution from violating a *vested right of property*? The question is decided in the affirmative. It can hardly be necessary to remark, that this principle extends to a vested right in slaves, as well as to any other species of property.

"The next decision upon this subject was in regard to *grants*. In regard to *Terrill vs. Taylor*, the Supreme Court decided, that a legislative grant, contemporaneously made, vested an *indefeasible and irrevocable title*. A State cannot revoke what it has once granted away; nor can the Legislature repeal statutes creating private corporations, and divest rights under them, without the consent or default of the corporators."

"One of the most important cases on the subject is that of *Dartmouth College vs. Woodward*. A charter was granted by the British Crown in 1769 to the Trustees of Dartmouth College, who acted under it, established the College, and acquired property. The Legislature of New Hampshire made material alterations in the charter, transferred the government of the College to the government of the State, and made the will of the donors subservient to their own. The Supreme Court decided that such a charter was a contract within the meaning of the Constitution; that the College was a private institution, not liable to the control of the Legislature; and that, therefore, the act of the Legislature was an act impairing the obligation of contracts, and void. The Court said, that charters of an eleemosynary kind, for the benefit of religion, education, or charity, administered by Trustees, were within the purview of the Constitution; and that rights acquired under them were vested, and protected by it."—*Polit. Gr.*, par. 269, 270.

Nothing can possibly be plainer, or more directly to the point, than this decision of the Supreme Court. Were there no other decision of the same character, this of itself would establish the principle judicially, that by the Constitution of the United States, the States themselves are inhibited from violating a vested right of property, even although that right should have originated in a British charter. Revolution itself was not regarded by the Court as capable of impairing that right. Q. E. D.

In the specific act of coveting, there are but two elements—1, a desire to have my neighbor's property for my own advantage; 2, in disregard of his rights.

Now it is manifest, that the guilt of coveting lies exclusively in the second element, and that it alone is the thing forbidden. This truth is unanswerably demonstrated by the single consideration, that in every case of bargain, sale, and transfer, each party is actuated by a desire to obtain the property of the other for his own advantage. And God wills, that it should be so. Were it otherwise, every human being would be incapable of obtaining lawfully a single means of enjoyment, except what he produced directly by the labor of his own hands. In such a condition, man would be incomparably less perfect than he is, and God proportionably less honored in his creation.

Since, therefore, the whole guilt of coveting lies in the second element, and it alone is forbidden in the tenth commandment—it follows, of necessity, that the full guilt of violating this precept may be, and is incurred,\* by encouraging in ourselves, or in others, a disposition that would lead, even remotely, to a violation of our neighbor's right of property—even admitting that we should not desire to appropriate that property to our own personal benefit.

The following statutes respecting slavery are worthy of serious consideration :

"If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve thee; and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. But if his master have given him a wife, and she have borne him sons and daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him unto the door, or unto the door-post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him forever." Exod. xxi. 2-6.

Abolitionists talk loudly of the immorality of *American* slavery in separating families. *Bible* slavery separated by express

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(\*) We accuse no man of *intentional* guilt in this particular. Rather would we say of our opponents, from the bottom of our hearts, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." We have had honorable examples, by scores, if not by hundreds, within the last few weeks, that, although conscientious men may ignorantly advocate an unrighteous cause, they will promptly abandon it, when convinced of its true character.

statute, in the foregoing case, the husband from his wife, and the father from his children—and this, too, not “*for crime*,” but from sheer regard to the slaveholder’s right of property—the same right that we have seen to be so sacredly guarded in the tenth commandment. If the servant, although a Jew, and entitled to his own freedom, was unwilling to be separated from his wife and his children, he had no other alternative than to relinquish that freedom to which he had a legal right, be marked as property, and consign himself into bondage FOREVER.

Again—“If a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand; he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, *he shall not be punished, for he is HIS MONEY.*” Exod. xxi. 20, 21.

Abolitionists, when defeated on the abstract question of the lawfulness of slavery, constantly betake themselves to the alleged adjuncts of *American* slavery—its *cruel laws*, &c. &c. There is no State in America, and no slaveholding community, so far as my information extends, that would acquit a master under the foregoing circumstances. God, however, alleges, in express terms, the master’s right of property in his slave, as a sufficient cause of his acquittal. The phraseology of the statute is worthy of notice: “*He shall not be punished, for he is his money.*” Let God be true, (as well as merciful and righteous,) though all the Abolitionists and Doctors of Divinity on earth should thereby be proved liars.

The Jew might not hold a Jew in bondage, (except in the one case already specified,) longer than till the year of Jubilee. “If thy brother, that dwelleth by thee, be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee, thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant: as an hired servant and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee *until the year of Jubilee*; and then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return.” This corresponds with verse 10th, and explains it. “For they are my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen. Thou shalt not rule over him with rigor, but shalt fear thy God.” Lev. xxv. 39–43.

It is self-evident, that the servant, who was thus to be set at

liberty in the year of Jubilee, was a Hebrew, and none else. In what immediately follows hear the contrast in reference to the Gentile slave.

"Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen, that are round about you; of them shall you buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers, that do sojourn among you; of them shall ye buy, and of their families, that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an *inheritance for your children after you*, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be *your bond-men FOREVER*: but over your brethren, the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigor." Lev. xxv. 44-46.

Nothing can possibly be plainer, than that the bondage of the Gentile, which was *hereditary* and *forever*, is here contrasted with that of the Jew, which was not allowed, except in one case, to extend beyond the year of Jubilee.

In the light of these Scriptures, which are so plain, that "he who runs may read," I hardly know which is most unaccountable—the profound ignorance of the Bible, or the sublimity of cool impudence and infidelity, manifested by those who profess to be Christians, and yet dare to affirm, that the Book of God gives no sanction to slaveholding.

I am well aware, that there is a passage in Deuteronomy, which some interpret so as to conflict with the undeniable import of the foregoing Scriptures.

"Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee. He shall dwell with thee, *EVEN AMONG YOU*, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best: thou shalt not oppress him." Deut. xxiii. 15, 16.

This command is manifestly given to the whole Jewish nation, to regulate their conduct with respect to the surrounding heathen, and not their conduct individually to each other. For a moment suppose it otherwise, and see the necessary result. By statutes, than which nothing could possibly be plainer, God had at this time stereotyped his approbation of slaveholding by incorporating it with the ordinances of the Jewish religion; had explicitly recognized, and sacredly guarded the right of property in slaves, in the moral, as well as in the ceremonial law; and had prohibited most emphatically, as we have seen,

not merely the violation of that right, but even the indulgence of a disposition that would lead to such violation. Who, that is not blinded by prejudice, or incurably infidel at heart, can imagine that God, in such circumstances, would himself enjoin a violation of those rights which he had so sacredly guarded? Messiah says, "A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand." Abolitionists wrest this passage from its obvious import, and force upon it a meaning that sets God in opposition to himself, and *would involve his empire in ruin*. Fanatics of all classes, (as I long since learned,) can play some most fantastic tricks before high Heaven, in the interpretation, or rather in the *misinterpretation*, of the Holy Volume.

In these *apparently conflicting* statutes, (by which a Jew was permitted to buy a Jew into bondage for a limited time, and a Gentile into bondage *forever*—but prohibited from delivering up to a *heathen master* the slave that might have escaped and come unto him,) there was manifestly the same benevolent regard to the moral and religious improvement of the heathen, whether delivered into perpetual bondage, as in the one case, or escaped from it, as in the other. Among the Hebrews alone had they an opportunity of being taught the only true religion. Better be slaves among them, than enjoy nominal freedom amidst the darkness of heathen idolatry.

How similar the case of domestic slavery, as it exists in these United States. By it multitudes have been saved from heathenish idolatry and superstition. Thousands and tens of thousands have been turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. And it is notorious to all, who are well informed on this subject, that even the temporal condition of the negro in American bondage is vastly superior (physically, as well as religiously,) to that in which he had previously existed in his native Africa. Indeed, it may fairly be questioned, whether there exists on the face of the globe a laboring population of the same extent as happy, and as well provided for in all respects, as the slaves in these United States. That their condition would be greatly deteriorated by emancipation, (whether they were allowed to remain in this country, or transported, willingly or *by force*, to Africa,) I have not the slightest doubt. The history of the race, bond or free, in Africa, America, and the West Indies; and the results of all attempts at



emancipation from the purest motives of public and private benevolence, fairly lead to this conclusion. The guardianship of the white race, in the present relation subsisting between the parties, has proved hitherto to be eminently conducive to the physical, intellectual, moral and religious elevation of the negro. Enlightened Christian benevolence, therefore, would say, let not that relation be disturbed, until we can have some well-grounded assurance, that emancipation will not involve both races, and especially the blacks, in such utter ruin as it is admitted to have produced in the West Indies.

From what has gone before, we may regard it as proved beyond the possibility of a doubt, unless the Bible be a *cheat*, that the institution of domestic slavery had the divine sanction from the day when Canaan's race were consigned to bondage, until the introduction of Christianity, a period of more than 2300 years. Nay, more—from the time when man, of his own free will, made himself the *bond-slave* of Satan in the garden of Eden, till the introduction of Christianity, we have seen, that by express statute of Jehovah, various grades of bondage existed, as a penal consequence of sin, and yet benevolently designed to co-operate with a remedial economy in effecting its cure. I unhesitatingly call the design benevolent. For, as the bondage of Satan and self-will is infinitely the most galling in its nature, and fearful in its tendencies, that can possibly be conceived—both wisdom and benevolence would decide, that a smaller evil, regarded as a remedy for one infinitely greater, should in that view be esteemed as a positive blessing.

Hence, if the Bible be true, to denounce slavery as being essentially criminal is to blaspheme God, by pronouncing sentence of condemnation on his statutes, and making him the author of sin. Nay, more; the reasoning of all such is manifestly as unphilosophical as it is directly opposed to the Word of God. As well might you argue that labor, and all the varied afflictions of this life, and all the restraints and penalties of human government, &c., &c., so necessary to the well-being of fallen man, are opposed to the will of God, because they are primarily a curse for sin; and because that, to sinless beings, they could only serve as an unmitigated calamity.

It now remains to inquire whether Christ and his Apostles repealed what God had previously sanctioned and enacted, not

merely in the sentence on Canaan, but in the ordinances of circumcision and the passover, in the *tenth commandment*, and in various other statutes of the Mosaic law.

All who are intelligent and candid on this subject admit, that (wholly unlike modern abolitionists) neither Christ nor his Apostles ever commanded masters, not even *Christian masters*, in a solitary instance, to free their slaves; nor even *advised* them to do so—nor *permitted slaves* to free themselves from their masters. It is also admitted, that slavery of the most degrading character was then general throughout the known world. Now, is not this exceedingly strange, on the hypothesis, that even the spirit of Christianity is incompatible with hereditary domestic slavery; especially when we remember what has already been proved, that from the days of Abraham till those of Jesus Christ the institution had received such marked tokens of the divine favor? Did Messiah, from motives of *policy*, and supposing that “it would not do to rely wholly on *truth and righteousness*,” overlook or connive at a system at variance with the natural rights of mankind, and which he designed to abolish gradually, though he shrunk from an avowal of his design? The supposition would be highly irreverent and impious, and is directly contradicted by the facts of the case. The Apostolic epistles abound with direct references to the relation, and with instructions to Christian masters and servants, how they shall best discharge their respective duties; but nowhere is there even a hint given that the relation is unlawful, or that a Christian master is laid under any obligation, either by *the letter* or by *the spirit* of his religion, to emancipate his slaves, though converted to Christianity, and his brethren in the Lord.

A few examples, out of a great number that might be produced, will be sufficient to establish this point.

Writing to the Corinthians, Paul commands Christian slaves not to be anxious to obtain their freedom. “Let every man abide in the same calling, (or state,) wherein he was called. Art thou called, being a bondman, (doulos, SLAVE,) *care not for it*. But if thou mayest be made free, use it rather.” 1 Cor. vii. 20, 21. “And so ordain I in *all the Churches*,” ver. 17.

In the letter to the Ephesians, after exhorting husbands and wives, parents and children, to a faithful performance of their

respective duties, the Apostle addresses himself to masters and servants in language, however, very different from that of modern abolitionists.

"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service as to the Lord and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be *bond* or *free*. And ye masters, do the same thing unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him." Eph. vi. 5-9.

Let it be remembered, that by the law of the land these Christian masters had the power of life and death over these Christian slaves. Had an abolitionist been there he would probably have reproved Paul, and attempted to teach him the way of the Lord more perfectly—reminding him, that as the laws gave the master absolute power, even of life and death, over his slave, the relation itself became sinful. Wonderful sages, truly, these abolitionists of the nineteenth century, who have discovered that the *abuse* is a sound *logical argument* against the *use*; and that the relation itself becomes sinful, provided the municipal regulations respecting it sanction improper treatment. On the same principle, and with equal consistency, might they apply their abolition logic to the relations of husband and wife, parents and children, &c., &c. A similar passage is found in Col. iii. 22-25, which the reader can examine at his leisure.

Writing to Timothy, Paul remarks,—“Let as many servants, (*douloi*, *SLAVES*;) as are *under the yoke*, count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God, and of his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have *believing masters*, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but *rather* do them service, because they are faithful and beloved partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is PROUD, KNOWING NOTHING, but doating about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of *corrupt minds*, and *destitute of the truth*, supposing that gain is godliness. *From such withdraw thyself.*” 1 Tim. vi. 1-5.

Fellow-Citizens, do you not think it at least highly probable that an inspired Apostle spoke the truth? If he did, the seal of Heaven's disapprobation is stamped on the brazen forehead of abolitionism, in characters than which none could possibly be plainer, or more easily understood. Not more plainly does God prohibit the violation of the right of property in the eighth commandment, "*Thou shalt not steal*"—nor the indulgence of a disposition to violate that right in the tenth commandment, "*Thou shalt not covet*"—than he has in this passage stereotyped the infamy and published the condemnation of abolitionism.

In short, neither Jesus Christ nor any of his Apostles ever interfered with the institution of slavery in any other way than to condemn and rebuke abolitionism, and to exhort both masters and slaves to perform faithfully, as in the sight of God, their respective duties.

It is well known that Paul sent back to his master, (*Philemon*,) a runaway slave, (*Onesimus*,) who had been converted to Christianity by his preaching. Had the Apostle been an abolitionist, even in feeling, here was an occasion that could not have failed to draw out his sentiments. But how stands the case? He sends the Christian slave back to his Christian master, with a letter entreating the master to forgive him for the injury he had done him in leaving his service. And to give additional weight to his request, he pledges himself that he will indemnify the master out of his own pocket, should he desire it.

It is a matter of curiosity to know by what process of reasoning those who regard slavery as opposed to the spirit of Christianity, attempt to harmonize the foregoing undeniable Scripture facts with their anti-slavery views. We desire to treat them and their arguments with the greatest fairness; and therefore we will let them speak for themselves, selecting for that purpose the ablest anti-slavery writer in America, the distinguished President of Brown University. In his "*Elements of Moral Science*," Boston Edition, 1847, p. 210, he writes thus:

"The moral principles of the gospel are directly subversive of the principles of slavery; but, on the other hand, the gospel neither commands masters to manumit their slaves nor authorizes slaves to free themselves from the yoke of their masters; and also it goes further, and prescribes the duties suited to both parties in their present condition."

President Young, of Centre College, Kentucky, took substantially the same ground, in his recent speeches in the town of Harrodsburg, in favor of Emancipation, viz: 1. That "Christ does not condemn slavery in express terms—but he gave those principles that will overthrow it. 2. He gave rules to regulate it." Indeed, all intelligent abolitionists and anti-slavery men take, in substance, the same ground.

Let us very briefly examine it, and see if it is tenable. The moral principles of the Gospel, referred to in order to prove the unlawfulness of slavery, are, "Thou shalt love thy *neighbor as thyself*, and *all things whatsoever* ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them."

It is obvious, that the whole force of this argument depends on the assumption, that these principles are peculiar to the Gospel, and did not appertain equally to the legal dispensation. For, it is undeniable, that under the law, God gave to the Israelites, by express statute, the right of buying and selling slaves, and handing them and their children down to their posterity as an inheritance forever—and if, at the same time, they were required to love their neighbors as themselves, there cannot be any incompatibility between this principle and the relation of hereditary domestic slavery. It would be alike arrogant and impious to charge Jehovah with sanctioning and instituting what, at the same time, he condemned and reprobated. And it would be no less arrogant and impious for the creature to pretend to be wiser than his Creator; and to be able to discover an *incompatibility* between a *principle* and a *practice*, where God saw none.

Now, it is evident, that this is not a question of doubtful reasoning, but simply a question of fact, that must be proved or disproved by direct testimony. How, then, stands the case? By a reference to Lev. xix. 18, it is proved, that the Jew was required to "*love his neighbor as himself*;" whilst he was expressly permitted by statute to buy a Jew into bondage for a limited time, and a Gentile into hereditary bondage forever. And by referring to Matt. xxii. 39, 40, it will be seen, that Jesus himself affirms, that this precept involved the very essence of the Law, so far as regarded the duties of man to his fellow man. Hence, it cannot be incompatible with any practice which that law instituted or sanctioned.

What a great thing, however, is this "feeling away down in the hearts\* of *Christian* (?) people, at war with the institution of slavery"—which makes them *wiser* than God, and enables them *infallibly* (*Popes?*) to perceive a discrepancy, where the *Omniscient* saw none. It was rumored, some time ago, that his Holiness was about to transfer the seat of the Popedom to these United States; but, alas, if he had any such design, he has been too tardy in his operations. Anti-slavery fanaticism has already created a goodly number of *Infallibles*, "sitting in the temple of God," and, in point of intelligence on moral questions, "exalting themselves above all that is called God, or worshipped."

On page 212, Wayland remarks, "We answer again, this very course, which the gospel takes on this subject, seems to have been the only one that could have been taken, in order to effect the universal abolition of slavery." \* \* \* "In this manner alone could its object, a universal moral revolution, have been accomplished. For, if it had forbidden the *evil*, instead of subverting the *principle*; if it had proclaimed the unlawfulness of slavery, and taught slaves to resist the oppression of their masters; it would instantly have arrayed the two parties in deadly hostility, throughout the civilized world: its announcement would have been the signal of servile war, and the very name of the Christian religion would have been forgotten amidst the agitations of universal bloodshed."

I frankly confess; that I am unspeakably astonished at the foregoing† sentiment, coming, as it does, from so distinguished

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(\*) This abominable sentiment, the parent of fanaticism, and the source of the basest crimes perpetrated in the name of insulted Christianity, was boldly avowed in the Frankfort Emancipation Convention. W. L. B., a delegate from Louisville, is reported in the "*Commonwealth*" to have said—"There is, Mr. President, a strong feeling in the hearts of the religious people against slavery. Not that they believe it against the Bible, or sinful according to God's law. That is the *dogma* of Abolitionists, and we renounce it. But there is, *away down in the hearts* of a large proportion of the Christian people in this land, a feeling at war with the institution of slavery. There are many thousand benevolent people in the State, who, I care not what they may say, *feel in their hearts, that slavery is wrong. Let that feeling be cultivated*, and brought to bear on this question, and it will shake this *Commonwealth to its centre*." The italics are mine.

No doubt, Nat. Turner, leader of the servile insurrection and massacre of the whites in Virginia, a few years ago, "felt in his heart," (and why should not "that feeling be cultivated, and brought to bear upon the subject?") that slavery was wrong—and that he was doing God service in trying to abolish it "by the physical force of the enslaved," as there was no hope of accomplishing it "by the moral force of the free."

Another member of the Convention, J. C. Y., adopted and advocated the same fanatical principle in his speeches in H. in favor of Emancipation, and to condemn slaveholding.

(†) The same sentiment is said to have been advocated last winter in the

a source. Can any idea be more shocking to the pious and well-balanced mind, than that the gospel should "*prescribe the duties suited to both parties*" in a relation that was directly opposed to the will of God? And wherein would such conduct differ from teaching men how they might *lie, steal, get drunk, or commit murder*, in accordance with the will of God, and "*their present condition?*" \*

Surely the unprejudiced don't need to be informed that a cause must be superlatively bad, for the defence of which its most distinguished champions can find no better arguments. And who will be so vain as to attempt that in which Dr. Wayland has so signally failed?

Hence, it is proved, beyond all possibility of reasonable doubt, if the Bible is admitted to be the word of God, that labor and bondage of various grades were instituted by Jehovah for the same holy and benevolent ends, viz: to punish sin; to limit its range, and its atrocity; and to co-operate with a remedial economy in effecting its cure. And here it should never be forgotten, that what is an undoubted curse, in one view and in one set of circumstances, may be as undoubted a blessing in another. How widely, in this respect, does the amputation of a diseased differ from that of a healthy limb! And how vastly different is the operation of medicine on a healthy and

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Frankfort Convention. A leading member is reported in the "*Commonwealth*" to have said, when speaking to a motion introduced by the Rev. W. L. B., of L.—"And, Mr. President, all good causes require policy, as an army requires a general. It will not do to rely wholly on truth and righteousness. The Bible is truth and righteousness, but its final triumph is slow, and far removed."

It seems, that more than one President is of opinion, that "it will not do to rely *wholly* on truth and righteousness." I shall not dispute their right to entertain this opinion, if they choose; but I must protest against ascribing it to Him, who was the soul of candor and straightforwardness, in whose lips no guile was ever found; who taught his disciples, on all occasions, to stand ready to sacrifice even life itself for the sake of truth and righteousness—and assured them, in the plainest terms, that, if they shrink from the sacrifice, they could not be his disciples.

(\*) Should it be contended, that it is more reasonable to compare Slavery with Polygamy, Concubinage, and Divorce, which, as Dr. Young properly contends, are not sin in themselves, ("God never sanctioned any thing that was sin in itself") but become so by statute—than to compare it with lying, theft, drunkenness, or murder, we will admit the force of the argument, when it is shown, that, in this case, as in that of slavery, the "*Gospel prescribes the duties suited to both parties*," teaching the man HOW HE MAY LIVE WITH HIS WIVES AND CONCUBINES, and teaching them how they may live with him, *in accordance with the will of God, and "their present condition."* When that is done, however, I presume that very few will be found to contend that these things are wrong. Till then, a comparison so exceedingly unfair only exposes the blind prejudice and intense infatuation of him who makes it. "None so blind as those who will not see."

on a disordered system ; in one case tending to destroy, and in the other to preserve life.

There yet remains another form of bondage to be considered, before we can understand fully the philosophy of this subject—I mean the bondage of human government. In a society of perfect men, where all understood what was morally right, and were determined to act accordingly, it is obvious that human laws, or even human organization to enforce God's laws, would be altogether unnecessary, and could serve no valuable purpose. To such a community the cumbrous machinery of the very best government, that ever existed on earth, would be oppressive in its operation and unintelligible in its design. Having no use for it, they could not even conceive for what purpose it was intended. It could not be put in operation ; for, in such a society, there would be nothing omitted that laws are intended to prevent. But, if we could even suppose that it might be set in action, (which would evidently be impossible,) still, to the whole extent of its supposed or supposable operation, it would prove an unmitigated oppression, since it would secure no good and prevent no evil that would not have been better secured or prevented without its aid. Hence, in the very nature of things, government implies restraint, and the limitation of human freedom. And it is only in a limited and comparative (perhaps I might even say, *negative*) sense, that any government can with propriety be called free. Some governments restrict freedom more than others, but all restrict it somewhat. And the universality of government is, at the same time, a proof of the universality of the conviction, that men *need restraint*, and are, to the very extent of this necessity, disqualified for the enjoyment of entire freedom.

In a society, the members of which could be safely trusted with perfect freedom, the *no human-government* creed, instead of deserving to be regarded as the wildest of utopian dreams, would exhibit nought save the most logical deductions of sober reason. No such community, however, has existed on earth, since that of the first sinless pair. Now, in a society of fallen and selfish beings, where animalism predominates over the intellect and moral feelings, no language could express, and no imagination adequately conceive the fearful consequences, that would inevitably result from allowing all to



have unlimited freedom. The destruction of all happiness, the infliction of all misery, and the ultimate extinction of the human race must be the inevitable result.

But a very grave question, and one, that, in my estimation, lies at the basis of the philosophy of this whole subject, might here be propounded, viz: By what authority can any community deprive the individual of the natural liberty, which God gave him? I answer, by the authority of God himself. And I argue it thus:

It will not be questioned, that the Deity wills the existence and happiness of the human race. As little can it be doubted, that he wills whatever is indispensably necessary for the attainment of these ends. But, we have already seen, that, among fallen and selfish beings, unlimited freedom would inevitably destroy not merely the happiness, but even the very existence of the human family; and, therefore, whatever considerations go to prove that God desires the existence and happiness of men, prove, with precisely the same force, that he wills the existence of social organization and human government for the express purpose of *abridging individual liberty*, and of abridging it *to any extent, that may be necessary* for the attainment of these ends. It has been well and truly said, that "self-preservation is the first law of nature." The same sentiment has been briefly and pungently expressed in another form, viz:—"necessity has no law;" that is to say, it is of itself the highest and most authoritative of all laws—a manifest indication of the will of God, and, as such, the divine source from which all right of human legislation is most unquestionably derived. Communities of men, therefore, have a *jus divinum*, a divine right to organize government, and to organize it in such manner, as may be necessary to secure their permanent safety and happiness. When government is thus organized, whether it be a monarchy, an oligarchy, or a republic, it exists, *jure divino*, by divine right.

It is granted, that a community may act unwisely in the selection of a form of government; but, still, the right to decide this question rests exclusively with itself; and, so long as it does not interfere with other communities, they, in their turn, have no right to interfere with it. This, I apprehend, is the sense, in which Paul is to be understood as affirming the divine

authority of every form of organized government. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For, there is no power but of God. The powers that be, are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist, shall receive to themselves condemnation." Rom. xiii. 1, 2.

I have said, that a community may act unwisely in the exercise of this divine right. But before we proceed farther, and in order to enable us to proceed more advantageously, let us take a brief review of the leading points, that have already been considered. We have seen, that,

1. Happiness is the end and aim of our being.
2. This happiness can be secured only by acting in harmony with all the laws of our nature.
3. Self-will, and insubordination to law, is the cause of all our unhappiness, individual and social.
4. Freedom, or liberty to act as we please, is a blessing, only in so far, as we please to act right. Beyond these limits, bondage is a blessing, and freedom a calamity, highly prejudicial to our best interests even in the present life.
5. The destruction of self-will, and the cultivation of a law abiding spirit—a spirit to do right in every thing and at all hazards—is identified with our highest happiness both in time and in eternity.
6. For the attainment of these benevolent ends, God at various times instituted, by positive enactment, bondage of different grades, including domestic slavery.
7. Human government is a divine ordinance, or appointment, for the accomplishment of the same benevolent object; and absolutely indispensable to its accomplishment, at least in the present life. When we say, that human government is a divine ordinance, we refer to *its authority*, and not to its peculiar form, or mode of organization. The thing itself is plainly declared to be the will of God, both in nature, and in revelation; and is enjoined upon us by the paramount law of stern and unbending necessity—the irresistible necessity of self-preservation. But the form has nowhere been enjoined, either in nature or revelation. The reason is obvious. No one form of government would be suited to all communities, nor even to the same community at all times, and under all circumstances of animal, intellectual and moral development.

Hence the sovereign of the universe has wisely and benevolently left it to communities themselves to decide for themselves what form of government is necessary, and best adapted, in any given circumstances, to secure the greatest good.

The foregoing reflections will readily suggest the leading principles, in accordance with which all governments should be constructed.

1. As bondage, in all its forms, is a curse on man for the indulgence of self-will, and of a lawless spirit, it is obvious, that it should exist in any government in *no greater degree* than might be necessary to secure the general good.

2. As among the lawless and self-willed, bondage is a blessing, alike indispensable to the existence of society, and of individual happiness, even in this world, it is obvious, that God wills its existence in every government, to such a degree, be it more or less, as many be necessary for the attainment of these ends.

Hence, although liberty is a priceless jewel, and of incalculable value to those whose intelligence and virtue render them capable of self-government—still, the qualities of mind, which impart this capacity, are infinitely more valuable; and without them, liberty could only serve as an instrument of self-destruction. Among the ardent and over-zealous admirers of freedom, there have unfortunately been found multitudes of superficial thinkers, who vainly imagine, that all men are capable of enjoying the inestimable boon of freedom and self-government. A wilder and more mischievous delusion has seldom perhaps occupied even the madman's brain. '*The Reign of Terror*,' during the French Revolution, when an attempt to carry out this principle, and to give civil liberty to a licentious and immoral people, the slaves of mere animalism and lust, baptized Paris in the best blood of her citizens, speaks volumes on this subject. Who will deny—who can even doubt—that the military despotism established by Napoleon was infinitely preferable to the lawless mobocracy, which it succeeded. The history of the world furnishes no instance of a more successful attempt in like circumstances to give liberty to a people enslaved to ignorance, to sensual appetite, and vicious indulgence. Had I a voice, that could penetrate to earth's remotest bounds, I would say to the misguided, though amiable, enthusiast every where, who is toiling for the universal extension of

freedom, regardless of the foregoing principles——Beware! You know not what you are doing. You are fighting against God, in fighting against his laws, written, it may be, not with pen and ink, but deduced from the stern and unbending necessity of things, and the paramount law of self-preservation. You never can succeed. You might as well expect to scale heaven, and dethrone the Almighty, as to subvert his laws, which decree that the slaves of ignorance and vice are incapable of self-government. Miseries, heart-rending and appalling you may produce. Carnage and desolation you may spread over the fair face of nature. The bloody horrors of the Reign of Terror you may re-enact. 'Twill all be in vain. It is unchangeably decreed by the Almighty, and engraven in the very nature of things, that men shall be capable of freedom no farther than they are intelligent and virtuous. Hence, it is worse than folly, it is madness in the extreme, to attempt to expedite the progress of liberty more rapidly than that of intelligence and virtue. The attempt will be disastrous, and can only result in the establishment of a more intense bondage. So all history decides, and so must every man decide, who takes an enlarged, a philosophical, or even a scriptural view, of this subject. Freedom, as philosophy decides it should do, has always kept pace with a capacity for its enjoyment. No intelligent and virtuous people has ever been long held in bondage; and no ignorant and vicious community has long enjoyed even the appearance of freedom.

Dr. Wayland, the zealous and able advocate of universal emancipation, in harmony with the foregoing principles, writes thus:—

“The best form of government for any people is *the best that its present moral and social condition renders practicable*. A people may be so entirely surrendered to the influence of passion, and so feebly influenced by moral restraint, that a government which relied upon moral restraint, could not exist for a day. In this case, a subordinate and inferior principle yet remains—the principle of fear, and the only resort is to a government of force, or a military despotism. And such do we know to be the fact. An anarchy always ends in this form of government.—*Mor. Sc. p. 354.*

“For beings who are willing to govern themselves by moral principle, there can be no doubt that a government relying on moral principle is the true form of government. There

is no reason why a man should be oppressed by taxation, and subjected to fear, who is willing to govern himself by the law of reciprocity. It is surely better for an intelligent and moral being to do right from his own will, than to *pay another to force him* to do right. And yet, as it is better that he should do right than wrong, even though he be forced to it, it is well that he should pay others to force him, if there be no other way of insuring his good conduct. God has rendered the blessing of freedom inseparable from moral restraint in the individual: and hence it is vain for a people to expect to be free, unless they are first willing to be virtuous. *Mor. Sc. p. 355.*

"There is no self-sustaining power in any form of social organization. The only self-sustaining power is in individual virtue. And the form of a government will always adjust itself to the moral condition of a people. A virtuous people will, by their own moral power, frown away oppression, and, under any form of constitution, become essentially free. A people surrendered up to their own licentious passions must be held in subjection by force, for every one will find that force alone can protect him from his neighbors; and he will submit to be oppressed if he can only be protected. Thus, in the feudal ages, the small independent land holders frequently made themselves slaves of one powerful chief to shield themselves from the incessant oppression of *licentious*."

It is hardly necessary for me to say, that I agree with President Wayland most cordially in the preceding sentiment.

I have already said, that it has been wisely left to each political community to decide for itself what form of government—or in other words, *what degree of bondage*—is best adapted to its peculiar circumstances. In the exercise of this discretion it may act unwisely. That, however, is exclusively its own business. No other community has any right to interfere, nor can it interfere without the reproach of officiousness, and the disgrace of being justly regarded as a busy body in other men's matters. Let it be remembered, too, that no government can serve a valuable purpose, or even long exist, unless its subjects are held in a degree of bondage suited to their intellectual and moral condition. Where the great mass are ignorant and vicious, human ingenuity has never been able to discover any method by which it is possible to evade the necessity of holding them, if not in *domestic*, at least in political bondage.

From the foregoing reflections, young gentlemen, you will readily perceive, that our unparalleled blessings of civil and religious liberty, result not so much from the form of our free

institutions, as from the intelligence and virtue, which are their indispensable support. For, a people like ours, human wisdom perhaps never devised a better constitution than that which, by the blessing of Heaven, unites our great confederacy of free, sovereign and independent States. Constitutions, however, possess no talismanic influence. And it is utterly vain to rely upon them for the perpetuity of our freedom, any farther than as they are sustained by the general intelligence and virtue of our citizens. Would you, then, perpetuate to the end of time our glorious, blood-bought liberty? Remember that it can only be done by the general extension of intelligence to understand and virtue to sustain our constitution and laws. The worst enemy of our country, therefore, is the man who, either in his own person, treats the constitution and laws with practical disrespect, or encourages others so to do. This deep, and, I had almost said, unpardonable guilt, is shared alike by the meanest criminal, that has been guilty of petit larceny, or murder, and the most honorable judge, juror, witness, or lawyer, who intentionally aids that criminal in escaping the penalty which he has justly incurred. The invariable tendency of all such conduct is to undermine the temple of freedom, and bury our most valued institutions in ruin. To act thus under the influence of misguided though benevolent feeling, is bad enough. But when the motive is avarice—whether in the form of a *bribe*, or a professional *fee*—such conduct is superlatively base.

I regard it as a fearful omen, that the moral turpitude of such conduct is not better appreciated, and more intensely abhorred. Another omen of most fearful portent, in late years, is the prevalence of mob-law. Let it once be clearly ascertained, that no certain reliance for protection can be placed in the legal tribunals of our country, and our liberties are at an end. No form of government is esteemed among men except for the protection which it affords, or is expected to afford, to those under its influence. If, therefore, men have lost all reasonable hope of being protected by a nominal republic, they will gladly exchange it for any form of government, though nominally a despotism, that may afford them a reasonable hope of protection. He, then, is a traitor to civil liberty, though such may not be his design, who aids the guilty to escape pun-

ishment, or in any way interrupts the equal course of justice between man and man, or gives countenance to the introduction of mob-law into organized society.

One other sentiment, young gentlemen, would I desire at present to impress upon your minds so deeply, if possible, that it might never be effaced. To be even capable of enjoying liberty, it is indispensable that you practice virtue. This momentous truth is a necessary inference from what has gone before. A moment's reflection will make this apparent.

We have already seen, that liberty to act as we please is a blessing only in so far as we please to act right; but that beyond this limit, bondage is a blessing, and freedom an unmitigated calamity. We have also seen, that bondage is a curse for sin, though benevolently designed to operate as a blessing to the sinner. From these, and the kindred sentiments with which these are associated, it is obvious, that every act of self-will and lawless indulgence naturally tends to qualify the infatuated transgressor for a state of bondage, and disqualify him for the enjoyment of freedom—or in other words, to produce and mature that character, for which bondage is a great blessing, and freedom as great a curse.

Well and wisely, then, was it said by the Great Teacher, 'If the Son shall make you free, then shall you be free indeed.' If you are delivered from self-will, and a lawless spirit, then shall you enjoy the only liberty that can impart happiness, or is worth possessing.

As you value freedom, therefore, and would attain to the highest dignity and happiness of which our nature is susceptible, resolutely determine, God being your helper, to suppress self-will, and cultivate a law-abiding spirit—an inflexible purpose to do right in every thing, and at all times, no matter what sacrifices it may cost. Thus shall you be free indeed—worthy citizens of our glorious confederacy. Thus shall you aid most efficiently in perpetuating our free institutions. And thus—and thus alone—shall you attain to citizenship in that better land, where the proposition will be fully and eternally demonstrated, that, by God's unchanging decree, inflexible virtue and perfect freedom have been harmoniously wedded in union indissoluble.

Appendix C  
THE MISSOURI SPEECH  
AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

PRO-SLAVERY CONVENTION

OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI,

*Held in Lexington, July 13, 1855, :*

ON

DOMESTIC SLAVERY,

AS EXAMINED IN THE LIGHT OF SCRIPTURE, OF NATURAL RIGHTS, OF  
CIVIL GOVERNMENT, AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL POWER OF  
CONGRESS.

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE CONVENTION.

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ST. LOUIS, MO.

PRINTED AT THE REPUBLICAN BOOK AND JOB OFFICE.

1855.



## CORRESPONDENCE.

LEXINGTON, Mo., July 16, 1855.

Pres't JAMES SHANNON,

Dear Sir:— Having been appointed by the Pro-Slavery Convention, recently held in this city, a committee for that purpose, we respectfully ask of you a copy of your Address (delivered by request of the Convention) for publication. We sincerely hope it will be convenient for you to comply with the wishes of the Convention, as we feel assured there is a very general desire to have it published.

Very respectfully, your obed't servants,

WM. SHIELDS,  
ED. WINSOR,  
C. PATTERSON.

LEXINGTON, Mo., July 17, 1855.

Messrs. WM. SHIELDS, E. WINSOR, C. PATTERSON,

*Committee of the Pro-Slavery Convention.*

Gentlemen:— In answer to your polite request of the 16th inst., that I would furnish for publication a copy of my Address, delivered before the Pro-Slavery Convention in this place on the 13th inst., I have the pleasure herewith to transmit a copy as requested.

With great respect, yours,

JAMES SHANNON.

## INTRODUCTION.



MR. PRESIDENT, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION :

Out of respect for the prejudices of those, who think that it is improper for Ministers of the Gospel to engage in political discussions, and who, therefore, censure me for discussing the question of domestic slavery, I offer the following explanation. I feel impelled to pursue the course I have taken on this subject, by the two following considerations :

1. I am an American citizen, possessing the same rights, and subject to the same obligations, as other citizens ; and I would consider myself recreant to these high obligations, and unworthy of the exalted privileges of American citizenship, were I, for any personal considerations, to shrink from the performance of any duty, that might contribute even a little to the enlightenment of the public mind, and thus to the peace, prosperity and perpetuity of the American Union.

2. I am a Christian, and a Proclaimer of the unsearchable riches of Christ. For many years I have been fully convinced, that God has raised up these United States as his own chosen instrumentality for the regeneration, political, social and moral, of a debased and down-trodden world.

But it is manifest, that the Union must be preserved, if it would exert any influence whatever for the accomplishment of this sublime result. In my deliberate judgment, however, the Union is placed in jeopardy by the persevering aggressions of anti-slavery fanaticism on the Constitutional rights of the South ; and no created power can save it many years, unless those aggressions are successfully *resisted* and *arrested*, and a proper regard paid to the Constitutional rights of the slaveholding States. How, then, can this be accomplished, fanaticism converted or beaten back, and the Union saved, to fulfil its high destiny in the regeneration of a ruined world ?

I am free to confess, that I can conceive of no better means for the accomplishment of these sublime results than to *cure* or *kill free-soil fanaticism*, the only hydra by which, at present, our country is in danger of being destroyed. And I am unable even to imagine a better method for correcting this fanaticism, than to enlighten the public mind on the subject of slavery in its various aspects. Hence I feel impelled alike by patriotism, and the highest regard for the salvation of a lost world, to enlighten my fellow-men to the utmost of my ability on this absorbing topic. And never did I descend into the baptismal waters, or enter into the place of secret prayer, or come to the communion table of my God, with a bet-

tor conscience, or a purer regard for the glory of God, and the salvation of the human family, than I bring to the present discussion.

Indeed I would consider myself wholly unworthy the privileges of an American citizen, unworthy the name of a man, or a Christian, were I to shrink from a faithful performance of this duty through the fear of any consequences that might result to myself personally. Even martyrdom in such a cause should not appal the patriot, or the Christian.

Besides, were it at all allowable to apply ridicule to subjects involving such momentous issues, it might justly be called supremely and contemptibly ridiculous to characterize a defence of slavery in a Slave state as an act of dabbling in *party politics*.

It is generally believed, that Ministers of the Gospel are, as indubitably they ought to be, the best qualified to discuss moral questions. That domestic slavery is a moral question—nay, more, a Bible question—will not be doubted; and its defence, especially in a slave State, cannot be regarded as dabbling in *party politics*, unless we admit, *that an abolition party exists among us, and is entitled to our respect*.

In the name of reason, then, has it come to this, that in the slaveholding State of Missouri a Minister of the Gospel is to be denounced as a "*politico-religious priest*;" to be unceasingly slandered and persecuted for daring to teach publicly, as well as privately, that slaveholding is not morally wrong, and for thus defending the Constitution and laws of the State in which he lives? Are Missourians sufficiently demented to encourage and sanction such vile persecution, whether it proceed from avowed abolitionists, or from their less honorable emissaries, hypocritically professing to be pro-slavery men? If so, *they are already sold to the abolitionists*, and it only remains to have the writings drawn to complete the contract. But we shall see.

Again, look at the inconsistency of those men who censure me for discussing this subject. Rob't J. Breckenridge, D.D., a Presbyterian Minister in Kentucky, has just published, on the same subject, a scathing reply to the recent speech of Senator Sumner. Who denounces him as dabbling in party politics?

The venerable Dr. Lord, President of Dartmouth College, N. H., *despite the efforts of the Trustees to suppress it*, is said to have published recently a book in defence of slavery, a book in which he takes substantially the same ground that I do. For this act, it will be strange if he do not suffer, *at the hands of fanaticism*, official decapitation. Lives there, however, in America even a *pretended pro-slavery man* so lost to shame as to advocate such a measure? If such a one exist, let him but stand forth, and he will be universally denounced and execrated by all but free-soilers and abolitionists. And, yet, can any thing be plainer than that if it be wrong for me to defend slavery in a slave State, much more so is it for Dr. Lord, President of Dartmouth College, to do the same, especially in opposition to the wishes of the Trustees, in a free State?

Consistency, thou art a jewel!

## DOMESTIC SLAVERY.

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THE subject of domestic slavery, in the present crisis, assumes an importance not easily exaggerated. No intelligent and unprejudiced mind can doubt that the repeated invasion of the Constitutional rights of slaveholders by the foul demon of anti-slavery fanaticism, if not speedily arrested, will, at no distant day, *force* a dissolution of the Union. However appalling the contemplation may be, unless the aggressions of free-soilism can be checked, this fearful result is as inevitable as the day of judgment. How important, then, that we discard all prejudice, and, as patriots and philanthropists, contemplate this momentous subject in its true light,—not as a mere speculative question about an abstract principle, but, as it really is, a fixed and stubborn fact.

Slavery is found in our midst. It was forced on the South by the combined efforts of old England and New England, now also leagued together for selfish ends, in an unholy alliance, for its extermination. The present generation of slaveholders are in no shape responsible for its existence. They had no agency in its introduction; and, therefore, although its existence were admitted to be their *misfortune*, it can never be proved to be their *fault*. Its abolition, under existing circumstances, is believed to be morally impossible. In 1850, according to the census of the United States, there were in the slave States, including the District of Columbia, three million one hundred and ninety-five thousand nine hundred and fifty-one slaves. The average value of an ordinary lot of slaves is generally estimated at one-half the price of a prime field hand. Such a slave will now readily sell for 1,200 dollars. Taking \$600, then, as the average, it will give us 1,917,570,600 dollars as the total value of the slaves in 1850. The natural increase, since that time, makes it reasonable to estimate their present value, in round numbers, at two thousand millions of dollars. At six per cent., the annual interest on that sum will amount to one hundred and twenty millions.

Strike out of existence at once this vast amount of productive capital, and it is not in the power of human arithmetic to compute, or of human language to express, the amount of financial ruin that would result, not merely to the slaveholding, but also to the non-slaveholding States, and to the civilized world. Besides,

it should not be forgotten that negro slaves alone are constitutionally adapted to labor in those climates where the great staples of cotton, rice and sugar can be produced. Emancipation, therefore, would convert this vast region, the abode of wealth, civilization and refinement of the highest order, into a howling wilderness. The loss of productive property in land, houses, machinery, and improvements of various kinds, thus rendered valueless, can hardly be estimated. An able article in "Blackwood's Magazine" for February, 1848, estimates the loss in this way, in the British West Indies, as being "certainly not less than two hundred millions sterling," whilst the estimated value of the slaves was only fifty millions. Though volumes might be written on this topic, my time only permits me to suggest it, and pass on.

But the financial ruin is by no means the most important item in this account of prospective abolitionism. Look to St. Domingo and the British West Indies. In short, look where you please, all history attests that emancipation would be the greatest calamity that could be inflicted on the blacks themselves; that American slavery has elevated their character, and ameliorated their condition, in all respects; and that wherever fanaticism or misguided philanthropy has cut them loose from the guardianship of the white race, they have not merely degenerated, but have retrograded with rapid strides towards a savage, and even a brutal state. Facts innumerable and well authenticated might be produced to sustain this position, did time permit. Again, the blacks form about one-third of the whole population included in the slave States: what disposition could be made of them, if emancipated? The free States, although rabid to steal them—when, in so doing, they are compelled to commit perjury, murder, and the most unblushing and indubitable nullification of the Constitution and laws of the United States—would not consent to receive even a moiety of them, if they could be had honorably and without committing these crimes.

They could not be sent to Africa. Even if benevolence presented no barrier to their expulsion, the resources of the Union—impoverished, as it would be, by their emancipation—would be inadequate to transport them to Africa, or to any foreign land.

They could not remain in our midst. It needs no argument to prove that the two races, in numbers so nearly equal, *especially under a republican form of government*, could not possibly coexist on a footing of social and political equality. Self-preservation, the first law of Nature, would compel one race to expel, exterminate, or enslave the other. The foregoing difficulties exist in their full magnitude even on the hypothesis that emancipation could be effected peaceably. But who that is not absolutely insane, or idiotic, can imagine for a single moment that this is at all possible? Who can imagine that more than six millions of American citizens, inhabiting fifteen States of this Union, would

consent to be robbed of property to the extent of two thousand millions, to which their rights are as clearly recognized, and as sacredly guarded, in the Constitution, and in the Bible, as to any other species of property? Would they not rather, in view of the inevitable and utter ruin that emancipation must bring in its train, appeal to the God of battles, buckle on their armor, meet the fanatical invader on the outposts of the Constitution with fire and faggot, and, if need be, perish bravely in the defence of their altars and their firesides, rather than meanly live to drag out a wretched existence, and in the end to suffer a more wretched and intolerable doom. In view of such appalling results, even supposing them to be barely probable, who but a madman, a traitor, or a fiend, could give countenance to that reckless anti-slavery fanaticism, which is rushing madly forward—through perjury, theft and murder, and over the prostrate, mangled, bleeding Constitution—to rob six millions of their fellow-citizens of two thousand millions of property; at the imminent peril, too, of dissolving the Union, or lighting up the torch of civil, perhaps servile war; baptizing our happy land in a sea of fraternal blood, and plunging in an abyss of rayless gloom this last, this best, this only hope for the regeneration of a debased and ruined world?

To all this, however, it may be objected, that slavery is a moral wrong; that our obligation to do right is paramount to all others; and that it never can be justifiable to do wrong from an apprehension of any evils, whether real or imaginary, that may be anticipated to result from doing right.

I reply most unhesitatingly, that if the first of these positions can be established, I admit all the balance. If it can be fairly shown that the philosophy of slavery is on a par with the philosophy of *lying*, of *theft*, or of *murder*, I will frankly acknowledge myself a wretch, justly deserving to be abandoned by God, and scouted from the society of all honorable men, if I ever thenceforward open my lips in its defence, or if I do not use all lawful and honorable means for its immediate and eternal overthrow. In such an event, I can see no other alternative for me, than, in my own sober judgment, to become either an *abolitionist* or a *villain*. This, fellow-citizens, is the rule, by which I desire to be tried myself. You will, of course, adopt or reject it, as you think best, in trying others.

In deciding the question, whether slavery be a moral wrong, I premise that I hold it as an axiom, *that the Bible is the only infallible standard of moral truth and human duty*. Not desiring impiously to presume to be wiser than God—to condemn what he has not condemned, or to justify what he has not justified—I repudiate, as the *quintessence* of infidelity, the sentiment, that men are able by the light of Nature, by any power of intellect, or by any feeling “*away down in the heart*,” to prove that to be wrong which the Bible sanctions.

My time will not permit me to do more, at present, than to cast a very hasty glance at the Bible argument; for a more extended view of that subject, the public are referred to my "Philosophy of Slavery," a work that has been before the American people for the last eleven years, and which, although it has been malignantly *caricatured, perverted and assailed* with all the powers of *wit, ridicule, billingsgate and sophistry*, has never yet been logically answered, nor a logical answer thereto even so much as attempted. This fact (taking into account the unenviable attitude in which the edition of 1849 placed many of the first men in America, both in church and state—all indeed who advocated or *even sympathized* with the scheme of emancipation then on foot in Kentucky) I am compelled to regard as an indirect admission, that the work is *logically* and scripturally impregnable. Indeed I hardly know if it is not superfluous to delay even for a moment on this aspect of the question. All who are well informed on the subject know, that, if the Bible sanctions any thing, it sanctions slaveholding. The most candid and prominent of the anti-slavery leaders (whether religious or *infidel*) have, within the last ten years, totally abandoned the Bible argument; and many of the latter class may now be heard blaspheming the God of the Bible in terms so malignant and fiendish, as might well make demons shudder. Let us, however, for the sake of those, who have not access to the work aforesaid, take a hasty glance at this view of the subject.

Very soon after the Deluge, Jehovah, by a positive decree, adjudged the posterity of Canaan to the relation of bond servants to the posterities of Shem and Japhet. (Gen. 9: 25-27.) The position of Abolitionism, that God in this passage merely predicts the future history of the three families, but does not sanction domestic slavery, is too stolid to need refutation. Piety and common sense alike revolt at the idea that God could be capable of predicting a wicked act, and at the same time, without even an intimation of his displeasure, pronouncing the most emphatic blessings upon the wicked actor. Yet such is the reproach impiously cast upon the spotless character of Jehovah by the absurd efforts of abolition logic to nullify the plain import of this passage.

When the war of the nine kings occurred in the vale of Siddim, there were found among Abram's servants, born in his house, no less than three hundred and eighteen men capable of bearing arms. (Gen. 14: 14.)

As this distinguished captain and slaveholder returned from the slaughter of the kings, God sent his servant Melchisedec to meet him in the way, and *bless him*. (Gen. 14: 18-20.) Not long after this event, God changed his name to Abraham (Father of Nations), made a covenant with him, and *stereotyped his approbation of domestic slavery*, by engraving it on that covenant,

and incorporating it with the ordinance of circumcision. "He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised; and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant." (Gen. 17: 13.) About four hundred and thirty years after this occurrence, when God was preparing to lead his chosen people out of the land of Egypt, and to make of them a great nation, he gave them the ordinance of the passover, and engraved his approbation of domestic slavery on that also, as he had previously done on the ordinance of circumcision.

"And the Lord said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof: but every man's servant *that is bought for money*, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. A foreigner, and a *hired servant*, shall not eat thereof. (Exod. 12: 43-45.) Thus did Jehovah stereotype his approbation of domestic slavery by incorporating it with the ordinances of the Jewish religion, the only religion on earth that had the divine sanction, from the calling of Abraham, three hundred and sixty-seven years after the Deluge, till the introduction of Christianity, a period of more than nineteen hundred years.

Nor is this all. When Jehovah had brought his chosen people out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, he gave them at Mount Sinai the law of the Ten Commandments, generally recognized throughout the civilized world as the *Moral Law*, and incorporated in its provisions a distinct recognition of the principle (so arrogantly denied by infidel abolitionism), *that man may rightfully hold property in man*. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his *man-servant*, nor his *maid-servant*, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's." (Exod. 20: 17.)

The character of the servants here spoken of, is put beyond the possibility of a doubt, in the statutes concerning circumcision and the passover. They are *slaves home born*, or *bought with money*, as contra-distinguished by God himself from hired servants. Again, "If a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he *die under his hand*, he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he *shall not be punished; for he is his MONEY*. (Exod. 21: 20-21.) We have already seen that, in the Decalogue given at Mount Sinai, God recognized right of property in slaves as distinctly (and guarded that right as sacredly) as in any thing else. But this is not all. Jehovah then and there prohibited the holding of a Jew in bondage longer than till the year of Jubilee, except in a single case, which is clearly defined, wherein the bondage even of a Jew might be for life. (Exod. 21: 2-6.)

At the same time, however, by express statute he permitted the Jews to buy the children of the gentiles, residing in the land of Judea, and in the surrounding states, into *hereditary bondage*



*for ever.* "Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you ; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land : and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an *inheritance for your children after you*, to inherit them for a possession ; they shall be your *bondmen for ever.*" (Lev. 25 : 44-46.)

In the light of these Scriptures, clear as a sunbeam, who will *dare*—who will *impiously dare*—to give Jehovah the lie to his face, and affirm, that *man* cannot rightfully hold property in man ; that slavery is a moral wrong, and on a par with *lying, theft, and murder* ? Volumes might readily be filled with passages in the Old Testament, going directly to prove that, in accordance with the divine approbation, slaves were held by God's chosen people, and *recognized as property.* But it is unnecessary, and I must hasten on. I am well aware that there is a passage in Deuteronomy, which abolitionists interpret so as to conflict with the undeniable import of the foregoing scriptures. "Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant that is escaped from his master unto thee : he shall dwell with thee, **EVEN AMONG YOU**, in that place where it liketh him best : thou shalt not oppress him." (Deut. 23 : 15-16.)

Abolition *higher-law* traitors and nullifiers triumphantly quote this text, seeming to regard it as a justification of their perjury in violating their oath to sustain the constitution and laws of the United States. This is most obviously a gross, if not a wicked, perversion of the passage. The precept in question is manifestly given to the whole Jewish nation, to regulate their conduct with respect to the surrounding heathen, and not their conduct individually to each other. For a moment suppose it otherwise, and see the inevitable result. By statutes, than which none can possibly be plainer, God had at this time stereotyped his approbation of slaveholding, by incorporating it with the ordinances of the Jewish religion. He had explicitly recognized, and sacredly guarded the right of property in slaves, in the moral as well as in the ceremonial law ; and had prohibited most emphatically, not merely the violation of that right, but even the indulgence of a disposition that might tend, directly or indirectly, to such violation. Who, that is not blinded by prejudice, or incurably infidel at heart, can imagine, that God, in such circumstances, would himself enjoin a violation of those rights, which he had so sacredly guarded ? Messiah says : "A kingdom divided against itself can not stand." Abolitionists wrest this passage from its obvious import, and convert the truth of God into a lie, by forcing upon it a meaning that sets God in opposition to himself, and *would involve his empire in ruin.*

Hence, if the Bible be true, to denounce slavery as being essentially criminal, is to blaspheme God by pronouncing sentence of condemnation on his statutes, and making him the author of sin.

But does not the New Testament repeal on this subject what had been previously sanctioned in the Old? The most talented anti-slavery men in America, with Dr. Wayland at their head, are compelled to acknowledge, that neither Christ nor his Apostles ever commanded masters, not even Christian masters, in a solitary instance, to free their slaves, nor even *advised* them to do so; nor *permitted* slaves to free themselves from their masters. "Under-ground railroads" in those days would have been disposed of without much ceremony. It is also admitted, that slavery was then general throughout the known world. The Apostolic epistles abound with direct references to the relation, and with instructions to Christian masters and servants how they shall best discharge their respective duties; but nowhere is there even a hint given that the relation is unlawful, or that a Christian master is laid under any obligation, either by the letter, or by the *spirit* of his religion, to emancipate his slaves; not even though they be converted to Christianity, and have become his brethren in the Lord. We have time to quote only a very few of such passages out of a great many that might be produced.

"Let every man abide in the same calling (or state) wherein he was called. Art thou called being a *bondman*? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather." (1 Cor. 7: 20-21.) "And so ordain I in all churches" (v. 17). "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord and not to men: knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or *free*. And, ye masters, do the same thing unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him." (Eph. 6: 5-9.)

"Let as many servants (*douloi*, slaves) as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have *believing masters*, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit." (*Literally*—but let them serve them the more, because faithful and beloved are those who partake of the benefit.) "These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is proud, KNOWING NOTHING, but doating about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disput-

ings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." (1 Tim. 6: 1-5.)

Thus, it seems, that they had some abolition *ignoramus* even in Paul's day; and that inspired Apostle pronounced them "*men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth,*" and commanded Christians to withdraw from their society.

If this be so, then indeed is the broad seal of heaven's reprobation stamped on the brazen forehead of abolitionism in characters, than which none could possibly be plainer, or more easily understood. Not more plainly does God prohibit the violation of the right of property in the eighth commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," nor the indulgence of a disposition to violate that right, in the tenth commandment, "Thou shalt not covet," than he has, in this passage, *stereotyped the infamy*, and published the condemnation of abolitionism.

In short, neither Jesus Christ, nor any of his Apostles, ever interfered with the institution of slavery, except to rebuke abolitionism, and exhort both masters and slaves to perform faithfully, as in the sight of God, their respective duties.

It is contended, however, by Dr. Wayland and others, that "the moral principles of the Gospel are directly subversive of slavery. The principles in question are contained in the precepts, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them."

Now it is obvious, that the whole force of this argument depends on the assumption, that these principles are peculiar to the Gospel, and did not pertain equally to the law; for it is undeniable, as we have seen, that, under the law, God gave to the Israelites, by express statute, the right of buying and selling slaves, and of handing them down to posterity as an inheritance forever. And if, at the same time, they were required to love their neighbors as themselves, there can not be any incompatibility between this principle and the relation of hereditary domestic slavery; for it would be alike arrogant and impious to charge Jehovah with sanctioning and instituting what, at the same time, he condemned and reprobated. And it would be no less arrogant and impious for the creature to pretend to be wiser than the Creator, and to be able to discover an incompatibility between a *principle* and a practice, where God saw none.

Now it is evident, that this is not a question of doubtful reasoning, but simply a question of fact, that must be proved or disproved by direct testimony. How, then, stands the case? By a reference to Lev. 19: 18, it is proved, that the Jew was required to "love his neighbor as himself;" whilst he was expressly permitted, by statute, to buy a Jew into bondage for a limited time, and a gentile into hereditary bondage forever. And by referring to Mat. 22: 39, 40, it will be seen, that Jesus himself affirms that

this precept involves the very essence of the law, so far as regards the duties of man to his fellow-man. Hence it can not be incompatible with any practice, which that law instituted, or sanctioned.

To the *unprejudiced* mind, possessing even ordinary intelligence, the true meaning of those precepts is obvious: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," can not possibly signify more than, that we should pay the same regard to HIS RIGHTS, that we desire him to pay to OURS. It does not define what *those rights* are, but leaves that matter to be ascertained wholly from other, and independent sources. So also, "Do to others as you would that they should do unto you," means simply—Do to others what, were you in *their* circumstances, it would be reasonable and proper for you to *desire*, that they should do unto you. The anti-slavery interpretation of this passage is, most evidently, both absurd and wicked. It makes the *erring* and *sinful* desires of selfish and wicked men the standard of duty, instead of God's *unerring* and inspired word. According to that interpretation, if A desires B to aid him in an infernal plot of seduction, theft, or murder, it becomes immediately his duty to aid B in a similar plot, if B is sufficiently a villain to desire his co-operation. I am amazed, that such men as Wayland and Chalmers should suffer their intellect to be so blinded by prejudice as to advocate an interpretation of these passages necessarily involving conclusions so horrible. Can there be better evidence, that prejudice is a torpedo, whose touch benumbs and paralyzes the most gigantic intellect?

I regard it, therefore, as proved beyond the possibility of a doubt, that, if slavery can be shown to be morally wrong, the Bible is thereby demonstrated to be *a cheat*.

But is not slavery opposed to natural rights, which are inalienable? I reply, that the laws of Nature are the laws of God as really as those promulgated in the Bible. Hence there can be no better evidence, that we *misinterpret* Nature, than the fact, that we draw from her teaching an inference at variance with plain Scripture doctrine. None but an infidel can deny this conclusion. With this single remark I might reasonably dispose of this specious objection, but for the sake of proving how utterly untenable is this, the very strongest of all the strongholds of abolitionism, I will examine for a little the alleged incompatibility of slavery with natural rights.

The relation of master and slave is merely that of debtor and creditor extended—namely, TO SERVICE FOR LIFE. The relation of debtor and creditor is a relation rightfully subsisting between moral agents, and no man, except a knave or a simpleton, will affirm, that this relation is incompatible with the laws of Nature. But if a human being can *owe service* for a year, and be rightfully compelled to *pay* it, he can for fifty years, or *for life*.

The only conceivable objection to this view is, that a man can not be thus bound without his own consent. To this objection I

reply very briefly, that moral obligation depends wholly on the relation *rightfully* subsisting between moral agents, whether with or without the consent of the parties. A few examples will establish this position beyond the possibility of reasonable doubt.

Children are brought into the filial relation *without* their consent; yet even Wayland admits that, "by the law of Nature," they owe their parents service "for so long a period as may be sufficient to secure an adequate remuneration" for the cost of raising; and that "this right he," the parent, "may, if he see fit, transfer to another, as in the case of apprenticeship."

Again: The human family became God's accountable creatures without their own consent; yet are they his (*douloi*) slaves, owe him service for *life*, and can never exhaust their indebtedness. And the highest dignity to which they can attain in this life is to be faithful (*douloi*) slaves—BOND-SERVANTS, *not* hirelings, of the Lord Jehovah.

This relation, too, when properly contemplated, is much more independent, dignified and endearing than that of hireling. There is an identity of interest, and there frequently is, and always should be, one of sympathy, between master and slave; but no such identity exists between *master* and *hireling*.

The master of a slave knows and feels, that he is bound to protect that slave from all possible harm, to supply all his reasonable wants while living, and to bury him decently when dead; and that his whole estate, even if he be a millionaire, together with his own personal energies, are legally as well as morally bound for the faithful performance of these duties, although that slave should never be able to render him compensation to the value of a single cent. The slave knows this, and that, if he have a good master, he need not be troubled about these things, but attend faithfully, when able, to the performance of reasonable service, and his necessary wants will all be supplied.

It must not be forgotten or overlooked, that the relations of master and slave are correlative, and the duties of these relations reciprocal. Both legally and morally, the master as truly belongs to the slave for the performance of a master's duties, as the slave belongs to the master for the performance (*when able*) of a slave's duties. In this respect, each may with equal propriety be said to own the other. Hence, in decrepitude from sickness or old age, the slave can say, "I have all things and abound." "I own a master, whose whole estate, and whose own personal energies are pledged for my support." The slave is, therefore, independent and happy.

Not so the poor hireling, who is wholly dependent on his daily labor for his daily bread. In sickness or old age, and often at other times, his only prospect is starvation, or the repulsive charity of a selfish and often heartless world.

In the very nature of things, then, no such identity of interest

or sympathy of feeling can possibly exist between the master and the *hired* servant, as we have seen to exist between master and slave. On the contrary, the relation of master and hired servant is purely mercenary, and the interests of the two parties *antagonistic* rather than identical. Each is impelled continually by selfishness to obtain the greatest possible amount, whether of service, or of hire, for the least possible equivalent. This thought is capable of being indefinitely extended and elaborated did time permit; but it does not, and I must hasten on.

Again: The Son of God, by his death, as a sin-offering, became, in a very important sense, "the Saviour of all men," and thus established a relation *without their consent*, by virtue of which they are justly held obligated as slaves—not *hirelings*—to serve him with all their faculties as long as they exist, doing not their own will, but his, in every thing. And if they refuse to render this service, they can be justly punished.

It is, therefore, self-evidently absurd, and directly subversive of the highest moral obligations in the universe—those that bind man to the throne of the Eternal, and of his Son Jesus Christ—to affirm that an individual can not, by the law of Nature, be rightfully bound, *without his own consent*, to render service for life.

Again: Two men, A and B, are thrown, by accident, on a lonely island. A assails B with an avowed purpose of killing him. In such circumstances, B has an undoubted *natural right* to take the life of A, to save his own. Much more has he a right to commute this penalty for the lesser evil of making him his slave for life.

The same reasoning will apply to communities as well as to individuals. And thus originated the natural right—in ancient times universally recognized—to make slaves of captives taken in war. It was a merciful commutation of the right to put them to death under the paramount law of self-preservation. In Deuteronomy 21: 14, a statute may be found, that clearly implies the divine recognition of this right. But time would fail me to specify a *tithe* of the modes in which a man may, by the law of Nature, be invested with an indubitable moral right to compel another to serve him for life.

It is almost superfluous to say, that, if a man can have this right, he can justly transfer it to another. Hence, if it is lawful to hold slaves on any account whatever, those slaves can be lawfully bought and sold. Nay, more, they can be lawfully born in a state of bondage. Suppose that B is the rightful owner of a female slave, who, in that capacity, gives birth to an infant; lingers a few weeks, months or years, all the time a burden and an expense to her master, and then dies. B nurses the child, feeds it, clothes it, pays doctor's bills, protects it personally, and pays taxes to the government for its protection as well as for his own.

All this he does and is legally bound to do, although he may have no hope of remuneration even to the value of a single cent, and may besides be burdened with the support of that child during the whole period of a long and sickly life. When the child has been thus raised to maturity, tell me, I pray you, *has B a natural right to its service* (a right which Wayland concedes even to the parent over his own child) "for so long a period as may be sufficient to secure an adequate remuneration" for the cost of raising, and for all the incidental liabilities and responsibilities, of which we have spoken, superadded? If he has not, it will hardly be affirmed by any but a madman, that he has any right to the labor of his hands expended in the raising of a horse, an ox, or a crop of grain.

But this case is too plain to admit of an argument. Now, it is admitted by intelligent men generally, that this compensation would be more than his market value, the only fair test of his *real* value as a slave, i. e., the exchangeable value of his service for *life*. Hence it has passed very generally into an adage, that slave labor is the dearest sort of labor; in other words, that the *compensation* which slaves receive for their services, all things considered, is much greater than what is generally paid for the same amount of labor performed by *hired* servants. Of the truth of this adage I have myself no doubt.

From the foregoing reflections, it is evident, that it would be difficult to conceive a more absurd and indefensible position than the vaunted dogma of abolitionists and free-soilers, viz., that slavery is opposed to natural rights, and can subsist only by virtue of the *lex loci*. The very opposite of this is true. Right of property in slaves, if it exist at all, must exist in pursuance of, and in harmony with, *natural rights*. It never has been created, and never can be created rightfully, by local law. Nor can LOCAL LAW RIGHTFULLY IMPAIR IT. It existed in this country, in its most perfect form, long before the States, as such, or the United States, came into existence. All that the constitutions and laws of the several States did in this matter, was to *recognize, regulate and protect* the pre-existing right. They *did not* originate or create it. This is all they did, and all that local law can rightfully do.

Slavery, then, is a relation rightfully subsisting between moral agents, and it is self-evidently absurd to *identify* that relation with *soil*. Hence there is just as little sense, and as much nonsense, in talking about *free soil* and *slave soil*, as there is in talking about *debtor soil* and *creditor soil*, parental soil and filial soil, married soil and bachelor soil, drunken soil and sober soil, or learned soil and ignorant soil.

Now, if it be admitted, as we think has been clearly proved, that slavery is a relation rightfully subsisting between moral agents, it follows necessarily, that the relation having once been estab-

lished *anywhere*, exists as a matter of course *everywhere*; and its obligations, like those of any other moral relation, may be rightfully enforced wherever the parties may be found, until it comes legitimately under the control of a sovereignty by which it is prohibited. This, too, will account for the fact already stated, that it never has been established by local law; and that the first legislation on the subject of slavery, everywhere, merely recognized and affirmed pre-existing rights. Nothing more was necessary where the relation was *properly* understood.

The provision of the Constitution of the United States, for the restitution of fugitive slaves, fully recognizes this principle:—  
“No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor shall be due.”

Here we have not merely a full recognition of the correctness of the principle aforesaid, but also a positive compact between the sovereign States, that each will respect the relation, even on its own soil, although it may have prohibited it between its own subjects.

Has Congress, then, the power to exclude slavery from the territories? This question naturally resolves itself into two others, viz: What power can government, abstractly considered, rightfully exercise over property? and, 2d. What power, in this respect, has been specially given to Congress?

In this enlightened age, among those whose opinions are entitled to consideration, there is but little, if any, difference with respect to the fundamental principles of the social compact. All admit, that human government is, in its very nature, an abridgment of natural liberty, and can be justified only on the ground of its necessity; but, at the same time, it is universally conceded that human government is indispensably necessary to protect its subjects from the wrongs which self-willed man is constantly liable to commit on the person, property and character of his brother man.

The principles, which lie at the very basis of this whole subject may be comprehensively stated in the following propositions, which may be justly regarded as self-evident truths, viz:

1. That God wills the existence and happiness of the human race, and, by necessary consequence, whatever is indispensable to the attainment of these ends.
2. That these objects can not be secured, unless rights are protected, and wrongs redressed.
3. That this protection of rights and redress of wrongs can not be had, in a degree commensurate with the necessities of our race, without social organization, *alias* human government.
4. And, therefore, that we have the same evidence, that God



wills human government for the *protection* of all the *rights*, and the *redress* of all the *wrongs* of its subjects, as we have, that he wills the existence and happiness of the human race.

Now, if these self-evident truths be admitted, it follows incon-  
testably, that human government, in the nature of things, neither  
has, nor can have any power, except for protection of rights, and  
redress of wrongs.

The inviolability of *private* rights, therefore, that of property  
included, lies at the very basis of the social compact. Conse-  
quently, government has no more right to take a single dollar of  
private property, except so far as may be necessary for its sup-  
port and for the accomplishment of its lawful ends, than the high-  
wayman has to take the traveler's purse. Hence it can not *create*  
right of property in slaves, nor can it *impair* it, where it already  
exists.

I admit that government has, and must have, the right to take  
private property, where it is necessary that it be thus taken for the  
accomplishment of its lawful ends; but not even then has it a  
right to take private property for the public good without full  
compensation to the owner. Deny this, and you make govern-  
ment but despotism, and liberty but a name.

This inviolability of the right of private property extends to  
right of property in slaves as really as in anything else. Hence,  
if an individual has a just claim to the service of another—wheth-  
er for a period of *years*, as in the case of an apprentice—or for  
*life*, as in the case of a slave—government can not possibly have  
a right to impair that claim. To concede such a right to govern-  
ment, would be to subvert the very purpose for which, and for  
which *alone*, God wills its existence.

If a political community, or State, considers domestic slavery  
incompatible with its prosperity, it has an indubitable right, in the  
exercise of its sovereignty, to cancel that institution; *provided*,  
however, that it make full compensation to the owners for the  
slaves thus emancipated. Without such compensation, govern-  
ment has no more right to emancipate a single slave than the rob-  
ber has to the purse or to the life of his victim.

Even the monarchy of Great Britain in effect fully recognized  
this principle in the emancipation of her West India colonies, by  
making partial compensation for the slaves thus emancipated to  
the extent of twenty millions sterling, (nearly 100,000,000 of  
dollars,) which was forty per cent. of their estimated value.

Also, the mongrel republic of Mexico, (a republic in name, but  
in reality a despotism,) in 1837, fully recognized the correctness  
of this principle. In that year, the Mexican Congress passed an  
act (I stop not to inquire by what authority they did it) to abol-  
ish slavery. This act, however, provided that the negroes to be  
emancipated should first be appraised; that government scrip,

payable to their owners for their full value, should be issued, and then the certificate of emancipation should be granted.

In our sister commonwealth of Kentucky, after a most thorough discussion of this whole question, on the stump and through the press, during the campaign of 1849, the Convention affirmed this principle almost by acclamation, and incorporated it in the fundamental law of the State, in words to this effect: "Absolute, arbitrary power, over the lives and property of freemen, exists nowhere in a republic, *not even in its largest majority.*"

The principle is undoubtedly correct, and ought to be explicitly stated in every political constitution.

By way of episode, and to let the audience see the infernal designs of at least some of the leading actors in that movement, I will here introduce a Circular written by T. H. Shreve, Paul Seymour, J. H. Heywood, Noble Butler, F. Crosby, and Wm. H. G. Butler, all of them citizens of Louisville, Kentucky, and addressed to the Editor of the Ripley Bee, a newspaper printed in the State of Ohio. Here is the Circular; let it speak for itself:

#### EMANCIPATION IN KENTUCKY.

LOUISVILLE, January, 1849.

DEAR SIR:—The people of Kentucky have resolved to hold a Convention for the amendment of the Constitution of the State. In August next delegates to this Convention will be elected. The present movement in this State on the subject of slavery, so deeply interesting to all the friends of emancipation, has reference to this Constitution. It is confidently believed that, if proper exertions are used, the friends of emancipation will succeed in engrafting on the new Constitution some provision by which the State will be relieved from the great evil of African slavery. There is a great demand throughout Kentucky for some practical arguments, showing the moral, social and economical evils of slavery; and we have no doubt that if the friends of emancipation had the means of printing and distributing tracts and newspapers containing such views as are needed, an immense amount of good would be accomplished. So firmly convinced are we of the advantages which would result from printing and circulating, gratuitously, arguments in favor of emancipation adapted to the wants of the people, that we do not hesitate to say that the success of the present movement will probably depend upon the adoption of such a course.

We have no doubt that if the profound interest of the present movement in Kentucky was fully appreciated, all the difficulties in the way of raising the requisite funds for the gratuitous distribution of tracts and newspapers would speedily vanish. If Kentucky breaks up her system of bondage, her example will have a powerful influence on the other slaveholding States. Delaware, Maryland and Missouri would soon rid themselves of slavery, and an agitation would arise in Virginia that would shake that ancient commonwealth to its foundations. Slavery hemmed in by impassable barriers on the South-west, with no new territory on which it could discharge its surplus, and with the present tier of Northern slave States arrayed on the side of freedom, would have a limit to its existence as well as to its extension. How long would it be before the people of the States in which the system would then exist, with all its dark and fearful features greatly aggravated, would call on the General Government for relief?

To all who desire the extinction of African slavery, the present movement in Kentucky commends itself with peculiar force. It affords the only practicable means of affecting the duration of the institution as a National evil. **THIS MOVEMENT RISES INTO A NATIONAL IMPORTANCE AND LOSES ITS LOCAL CHARACTER AS WE REGARD IT AS THE FIRST GREAT STEP TOWARDS THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY IN THE UNITED STATES. WHO, THEN, THAT DESIRES TO SEE OUR COUNTRY REDEEMED FROM THE CURSES OF SLAVERY, WILL NOT BE WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE TO A FUND TO BE APPLIED TO THE**

GRATUITOUS CIRCULATION OF TRACTS AND NEWSPAPERS IN KENTUCKY? These documents will necessarily circulate beyond the borders of this State, and have due influence in neighboring slave States, as they will emanate from a slave State, and express views displaying entire familiarity with the subject as it presents itself to those who have been long accustomed to its evils. The arguments, facts and truths that we use will be treasured up and used to prepare the public mind in other States for movements similar to that now in progress in Kentucky.

WE EARNESTLY INVOKE THE SYMPATHY AND AID OF FRIENDS WITHIN BOTH OUR OWN AND OTHER STATES. WE ASK THEM TO COME FORWARD AND CONTRIBUTE TO A FUND WHICH SHALL BE MOST SACREDLY APPLIED TO PRINTING AND GRATUITOUSLY CIRCULATING TRACTS AND NEWSPAPERS CALCULATED TO STRENGTHEN, DEEPEN AND WIDEN THE FEELING IN FAVOR OF EMANCIPATION. We are willing to superintend the preparation and distribution of such documents, and hope that enough persons will be found ready to co-operate with us in this great and glorious work of philanthropy, patriotism and humanity, to place its success beyond peril.

We would especially direct the attention of the friends of emancipation to the Louisville Examiner. This paper, we are satisfied, has been instrumental in doing a great deal of good. If permitted to go out of existence at a period of such profound interest as the present, it would sadden the hearts and the hopes of those who are contending for the removal of slavery from the States; and yet, as the subscription to the paper is unequal to its support, it can be continued only by the assistance of friends. It is of the last importance that "The Examiner" be continued, and that a FUND BE CREATED FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRINTING A LARGE NUMBER OF COPIES FOR GRATUITOUS DISTRIBUTION IN EVERY PART OF THE STATE. The non-slaveholders comprise a large portion of the voters of Kentucky, and we are deeply solicitous that they shall be reached by the facts and arguments presented by "The Examiner." What friend of emancipation can refuse to contribute liberally to a work of such magnitude and interest?

THOM. H. SHREVE,  
PAUL SEYMOUR,  
F. CROSBY,  
JOHN H. HEYWOOD,  
NOBLE BUTLER,  
W. H. G. BUTLER.

N. B.—Contributions forwarded to Rev. J. H. Heywood, Treasurer of our Society, will be reported to the Committee.

You will observe that the authors of the foregoing Circular regarded the emancipation movement in Kentucky "AS THE FIRST GREAT STEP TOWARDS THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY IN THE UNITED STATES;" that if emancipation then succeeded in Kentucky, the States of "*Delaware, Maryland and Missouri would soon rid themselves* of slavery, and an agitation would arise in Virginia that would shake that ancient commonwealth to its foundations." In that event, say they, slavery "would have a limit to its existence as well as to its extension. How long would it be, before the people of the States in which the system would then exist, with all its *dark and fearful* features greatly aggravated, would call on the general government for relief?"

Who is ignorant of the fact, that Northern abolitionists glory in avowing publicly that they are actuated by the same treasonable and hellish designs, in their efforts to abolitionize Kansas, and thus plant a colony of *negro-thieves* on our Western border.

Believing the scheme of emancipation then advocated to be

nothing else than a barefaced system of public robbery, and that its success would *inevitably* and *speedily* result in a dissolution of the Union,—at the call of my fellow-citizens, and impelled alike by piety and patriotism, at the risk of reputation and even life itself, I threw all my energies of soul, body and spirit into the campaign, and did what I could, whether much or little, to save the Constitution and the Union from the imminent peril to which they were then exposed. The glorious results of that campaign, soul-cheering to every true patriot, are before the country. The assaults of anti-slavery fanaticism were beaten back, the rights of slaveholders defended, and the sacred guarantees of the Constitution triumphantly vindicated.

During its progress, and immediately after its close, the most malignant threats of vengeance were made against me by emancipation leaders, whose unholy and ambitious schemes I had aided to defeat. A fiendish system of wholesale lying and defamation, publicly and privately, was immediately set on foot, and has continued, with but little abatement, to the present time. Anonymous and lying assaults were made upon me in the emancipation organ in Kentucky, and promptly republished in Missouri, in filthy sheets, which self-respect forbids me to name. This was done before I had ever set foot on Missouri soil.

The wholesale lying and slander with which I have been persecuted since my arrival in Missouri by the entire phalanx of abolition and free-soil leaders, and by the filthy lying sheets identified with them in interest and sympathy, whether *political* or *religious*, some of which seem to be incapable of telling the truth when a lie can be made to serve their purpose,—these things multitudes of my fellow-citizens well know, and can truly attest.

I leave you to judge how far these fiendish efforts to destroy my reputation, and to prostrate the State University, over which I have the honor to preside, were prompted by a spirit of revenge for the part I then acted—a conviction that abolitionism and free-soilism could get no foothold in the University so long as *I* presided over its destinies, and an apprehension that the part which I acted in Kentucky in 1849, I would act over again in Missouri should a similar emergency ever occur.

If they regard me as at all in their way, I commend the cunning and the untiring zeal, which they manifest to compass my assassination—so far, at least, as reputation is concerned, which, to an honorable and sensitive man, is often dearer than life itself. But I fear them not. I hurl proud defiance in the viper teeth of Abolitionism, and the motley crew of his abettors and sympathizers; and I assure them, one and all, that, should the day arrive, when my labors shall be needed in Missouri as they were in Kentucky in 1849, I shall, without a moment's hesitation, draw the sword of the Spirit—a *true* Damascus blade as was ever forged in the armory of *Heaven*—and I shall neither ask nor give quar-

ter till the battle is fought, and the victory won, or the friends of the Constitution and the rights of the South lie buried in the common grave, that entombs the liberties of our country. To God Most High, and under him to the general intelligence, virtue and patriotism of my fellow-citizens, do I most cheerfully commit my reputation. My motto this: "The Lord will defend the right."

But, to return from this digression, we have seen that *protection*, not *plunder*, being the only lawful object of government, no matter what may be its form, it follows of necessity that were the government of the United States a consolidated despotism, even then it could not possibly have the right to violate a vested right of property. And if, as we have seen, right of property in slaves is sanctioned by the light of Nature, the Constitution of the United States, and the clear teaching of the Bible, a deliberate and persistent violation of that right, even by government, is as villainous as highway robbery; and, when peaceable modes of redress are exhausted, IS A JUST CAUSE OF WAR BETWEEN SEPARATE STATES, AND OF REVOLUTION IN THE SAME STATE.

Proclaim it aloud, then, in the hearing of my enemies; publish it, if you please, to the ends of the earth, that I have said it;—and if this be treason, let free-soil traitors and abolition negro-thieves, leagued with British Tories in an unholy conspiracy to dissolve the Union, make the most of it.

But the government of the United States is not a consolidated central despotism, although many who glory in the name of American, whilst they dishonor that name, seem to think so. On the contrary, it is that of a federal republic, having no powers whatever except what its creators, the States, expressly granted in the Constitution, and which are "*necessary and proper*" to carry the granted powers into effect.

If, therefore, it would be wholly inadmissible for even a despotism to impair a vested right of property in any thing, slaves included, much more so would it be for Congress. Hence, any interpretation, of any part of the Constitution, which claims this power for Congress, is manifestly absurd, abolishes at a single stroke all constitutional restraints upon its authority, makes it despotic in the highest sense possible, and gives it powers, that not even a despotism can rightfully exercise.

I am well aware, that the foregoing principles, if correct, place in a very unenviable light the notorious *three thousand New England clergymen*, who sent the anti-Nebraska memorial to the Senate last year, notwithstanding their implied claim of superior merit as *Protestants*. The friends of the South will do well to remember this fact. If truth, so important to be known and understood by the public, should cast discredit even on *Protestant* clergymen, I see no reason why it should be concealed on that account. It will require better authority than that of even *three*

*thousand* fanatical Protestant clergymen to convince any reasonable man, that Congress possesses the power to prohibit slavery in the Territories.

But some imagine that Art. 4, Sec. 3, clause 2, gives Congress the power to abolish slavery in the Territories, and exclude it therefrom. This clause reads thus: "The Congress shall have power to dispose of, and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to prejudice any claims of the United States, or of any particular State."

On this I remark, that the power here granted is limited expressly to the *disposal* of the territory as *property*, and to the making of "all needful rules and regulations" for that end. The word "*other*," qualifying *property* in this clause, is undoubtedly nonsensical and absurd, unless territory in this connexion is contemplated as property; the words "*other property*" necessarily implying at least a *second class* of property, which can not possibly be any thing else than "*territory*" immediately preceding. And, therefore, before it can be admitted, that this clause gives Congress the power to exclude slavery from the Territories, it must be shown, that the possession of this power by Congress is absolutely necessary for the disposal of the territory regarded as public property.

Again: Whatever power this clause gives to Congress, extends in all its length and breadth to all the *territory* and *public property* belonging to the United States. Not a single acre of land, or dollar's worth of property, is excepted. If, therefore, by virtue of this clause, Congress has power to abolish slavery in the Territories, and exclude it therefrom, it has the very same right to erect on every acre of land that it owns, within the limits of the slave States, an asylum for British Tories and abolition negro-thieves. The conclusion is irresistible.

But who can believe that the framers of the Constitution intended to give Congress this monstrous power? What inhabitant of a slave State, who has fairly and fully examined the subject, can advocate it, unless identified, at least in sympathy, with the abolitionists? And when the advocates of this pernicious political heresy have accomplished, in their own estimation, this marvelous exploit of logical legerdemain, what have they proved? Why, simply, that the Constitution confers on Congress a power, the exercise of which, even in a despotism, would, as we have clearly seen, be a just cause of revolution.

Missourians! beware, as you would of the viper's deadly fang, of the upas influence of those men, whether *native* or *naturalized*, who exert their ill-gotten influence, and exhaust all their powers of argumentation and sophistry, to convince you that the *power* question is an *immaterial* issue; who, instead of warning

their fellow-citizens of the fearful and impending danger to which they are exposed, and laboring to arouse and unite them as one man in a manly and determined resistance to the common enemy, *traitor-like*, raise the wolf-howl of nullification, secession, disunion, against the best, the most loyal, the *only true* friends of the Constitution—men who, at every hazard, would protect it against the assaults of despotism. Can any plan be conceived by which they could more successfully promote the schemes of abolition traitors than by this parricidal course, laboring to divert the attention of the South from their real danger, and making a pretended love for the Union a masked battery, from which to co-operate more effectively with its only real enemies, for its speedy and everlasting overthrow?

It should never be forgotten, that no government *is*, or *ought to be*, esteemed among men, except for its capacity, *supposed* or *real*, to protect the rights, and redress the wrongs of its subjects. When any government becomes either too weak, or too wicked, to perform this duty, wise men will gladly exchange it, though nominally a republic, for any other form of government, though nominally a despotism, that may be necessary to secure the aforesaid objects. And when a government, instituted solely for protection and redress, becomes itself an instrument of oppression and plunder, and all reasonable hope that it can be reformed is lost, in that event revolution (peacefully, if possible—but at the bayonet's point and cannon's mouth, if necessary) becomes one of the highest and most patriotic duties, that a moral and intelligent community can have to perform. In such a case, "*resistance to tyrants is obedience to God.*" In this country, at least, the Declaration of Independence has canonized this sentiment in the heart of every true patriot. "When a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them [any community] under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security."

This sentiment of our revolutionary heroes and patriots is undoubtedly correct; and no man calling himself American, whether native or naturalized, unless he be a cory or a traitor, will call it in question; much less will he strive to render its advocates odious by stigmatizing them with opprobrious epithets.

Were the government of the United States, then, even a consolidated despotism, the usurpation by it of a power to impair or abolish right of property in slaves, in any place on earth, to which its authority under the Constitution extends, would be a just cause of revolution.

And can any sane man imagine, that the usurpation of such despotic power by a very limited government, which the sovereign States created "*to provide for the COMMON DEFENCE,*" will not be resisted at all hazards, and to the utmost extent, by

more than six millions of American freemen, inhabiting fifteen sovereign States of this Union, whose property to the extent of two thousand millions, and whose very lives, are put in jeopardy by this usurpation? Believe it not, fellow-citizens. The advocate of a doctrine so self-evidently absurd is not to be trusted.

The framers of the Constitution were not so insane as to grant to Congress this despotic power. They affirm with unmistakable plainness, that the powers not granted, or "necessary and proper" to carry into effect the granted powers, are withheld. This power has neither been granted, nor can it be shown that it is "necessary and proper" to carry into effect any one of the granted powers. By logical necessity, therefore, it follows, that it has been withheld. If it has not, it is absurd to call our government one of limited powers. In such circumstances, it would be impossible to conceive a more absolute despotism.

In the present alarming crisis, then, what should be done to beat back the aggressions of anti-slavery fanaticism, and thus, if possible, prevent a dissolution of the Union, or a result still more to be dreaded?

The friends of the Constitution and of the constitutional rights of the South should unite as one man, forgetting all other party issues; and let our enemies see how vain is their hope, that domestic traitors, in disguise, can succeed in keeping us warring upon each other on account of exploded and comparatively insignificant party issues, that they may thus, at an unexpected moment, deliver us up an easy prey into the hands of our enemies.

Regard the man, who would even counsel such division, as an enemy, a second Arnold, an emissary of the unholy alliance between England, France and New England abolitionists.

By their fruits ye shall know them. It is not to be expected that any man in a slave State will acknowledge himself an abolitionist, or an emissary of abolitionists, any more than that Benedict Arnold, while commander of a stronghold, which he designed, at the first opportune moment, to surrender to the British, would acknowledge, that he had been bribed by British gold. Such an acknowledgment, if it did not endanger their persons, would at least in a great measure destroy their capacity for mischief.

They must be judged by their acts. If they labor to weaken the South by keeping alive the foul demon of party spirit; if they are ready to palliate the aggressions of the negro-thieves, and the States and parties by which they are sustained; if they are prompt to exaggerate and denounce the measures of necessary self-defence that an injured and exasperated community may be compelled to take in providing new guards for their future security; and, especially, if they denounce by opprobrious epithets those, whose only alleged offence is too great devotion to the constitutional rights of the South,—you neither need, nor can get, better evidence of their complicity with our enemies.



Good men, especially such as have not thoroughly examined the Bible on this subject, may honestly think, that slaveholding is sinful, and it would be an outrage to interrupt them on account of this opinion. Again: A *bona fide* settler in Kansas (of course I do not mean a paid agent of abolitionism, whether a pauper, or a felon, from New England or Old England) may really believe that it his duty to vote to make Kansas a free State, having proper regard meanwhile to the rights of slaveholders; and for such opinion and vote he ought not to be interrupted.

But the practical abolitionist, who labors to impair a vested right of property in slaves, is a *negro-thief*. And a negro-thief should be regarded and treated as a horse-thief, a burglar, or any other sort of thief; and those who give them aid and comfort should be regarded and treated as their accomplices in guilt. An organized band of such persons, and for such ends, should be treated as an organized band of conspirators against the lives and property of the citizens, enemies alike to God and man; and, therefore, slaveholding communities have just the same right to take all *necessary measures of defence*, whether legal or extra legal, judicial or extra judicial, against a negro thief, or an organized band of negro thieves, as they have a right to take, and are universally acknowledged to have a right to take, against horse-thieves, or house-thieves.

The man, therefore, who, in point of law and morals, puts the man who is robbed on a par with the robber—him who “agitates the subject of slavery in Congress or elsewhere,” for the defence of vested rights, on a par with him who agitates for the violation of those rights,—must necessarily have either a *very weak head*, or a *very bad heart*; and, in either case, is wholly unfit to be trusted, especially in a slaveholding community. It was mainly for this cause that, in the late Kansas meeting in Columbia, I objected to the passage of (what are called) Switzler’s Resolutions by themselves. Those resolutions, in the main, contain excellent sentiments, which I most heartily endorse, and, as I then stated, are susceptible of such an interpretation throughout as would be unexceptionable. Hence I was willing to vote in mass for both sets, as the second would contain the necessary explanation and interpretation of the first; but, without that explanation, I could not begin to vote for the 6th Resolution, because it was easily susceptible of an interpretation that made no distinction between agitation on the part of slaveholders *in necessary self-defence*, and the aggressive agitation of abolitionists and negro-thieves: and I asked barely ten minutes to show that such a sentiment was dark as Erebus, and replete with lurking treason to the South.

For the foregoing reasons, too, I approbate, adopt, and endorse with my whole heart the doctrine of Lee’s Resolutions, as follows:

## DR. LEE'S RESOLUTIONS.

WHEREAS, it is indubitable that God wills the existence and happiness of the whole human family; that the capacity of the races respectively, and of the successive generations of those races, are adapted to the several spheres they are designed to fill; that their existence and happiness can not be secured without the protection of rights, and redress of wrongs; and that this protection and redress can not be secured in any degree commensurate with our necessities without social organization, which organization must necessarily be adapted to the moral and intellectual condition of those for whom it is intended: Therefore,

Resolved, That human government exists in accordance with the will of God, (and by the consent of the governed if they are morally and intellectually qualified for self-government,) for the protection of the rights and the redress of the wrongs of its subjects, deriving all its just powers from its necessity for, and its adaptation to, the accomplishment of these purposes.

Resolved, That to resist government in the accomplishment of its lawful objects, and the exercise of its just rights, or to subvert its authority when directed to these ends, is highly criminal, and destructive of the best interests of society and the human family.

Resolved, That when any government, from whatever cause, is incapable of protecting the rights and redressing the wrongs of its subjects, it is their inalienable right, both as individuals and as communities, and it is their duty, to take protection and redress into their own hands, and to provide all necessary guards for their future security.

Resolved, That, in accordance with these principles, all communities, whether savage or civilized, admit the right of necessary self-defence, and the consequent right of abating, by extra-legal means, such nuisances as are intolerable and can not be abated by regular operations of law.

Resolved, That the fanatical and persevering efforts of Abolitionists and Abolition Societies to render our slave property insecure, and to excite the evil passions of those slaves to insubordination, has a direct tendency to incite them to servile war, with all its attendant horrors; and is such an invasion of our rights, that we feel justified in pledging our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor, to each other, to the State, and to our sister slave States, that we WILL ABATE IT, to the utmost extent of our ability, peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must.

Resolved, That the repeated invasion of the constitutional rights of the slave States, has a direct tendency to dissolve the Union, and, if persisted in, must inevitably lead to this deplorable result, as the only refuge from impending evils of the most appalling and intolerable character; and we therefore pledge ourselves, irrespective of all previous party ties, to abjure all minor issues, and unite as one man in waging a deadly war on abolitionism, and resisting all its vile efforts, whether made by force or fraud, to trample our constitutional rights under its unhallowed feet.

Resolved, That we appeal to the intelligence, patriotism and loyalty of the free States, to arrest the torrent of abolition fanaticism that is sweeping over them in open violation of our constitutional rights, exposing the Union of these States to imminent peril, and if not speedily arrested, to certain annihilation.

Resolved, That the whole State is identified in interest and sympathy with the citizens on our Western border; and we will co-operate with them in all proper measures to prevent the foul demon of Abolitionism from planting a colony of negro-thieves on our frontier to harass our citizens and steal their property, it matters not whether that colony be im-

ported from European poor-houses and prisons, or from the pestilential hot-beds of New England fanaticism.

Resolved, That we regard the emissaries of Abolitionism, whether open or disguised, as our vilest enemies—conspirators against the peace and permanency of our Union, and as such we feel bound to give them no countenance nor encouragement whatever, but on the contrary, as it is our duty in self-defence, we will use all lawful and proper means to expose them to a just retribution, and a lawful and well merited infamy.

Resolved, That as we believe the Missouri Compromise to have been at variance with the spirit and objects of the federal compact, in which are conferred all the powers of the General Government, we most heartily approve of the repeal of that most odious measure, and as cordially endorse the Kansas-Nebraska bill, believing its principles to be correct. We, therefore, have seen with feelings of indignation and abhorrence the efforts made by citizens of free States to deprive slaveholders of the rights which the Kansas bill was designed to restore; and while we deprecate the necessity, we can not too highly appreciate the patriotism of those Missourians who so freely gave their time and money for the purpose, in the recent election in Kansas, of neutralizing said abolition efforts, and preventing the fraud attempted by the importation of hiring voters into that Territory.

Resolved, That the other counties in the State be requested to hold meetings and express their sentiments on the subject, so that whatever hopes may be entertained by the abolitionists of reaping any advantage from division among us, may be dispelled; and that the people of this State, irrespective of all party considerations, may present an unbroken front of opposition to the foul designs of the abolitionists.

Resolved, That we view with indignation the efforts made in Congress as well as in the Northern States to repeal or render inoperative the Fugitive Slave Law, and that we will not submit to the repeal.

Resolved, That delegates be appointed to represent this meeting in the Convention to be held in Boonville, and that the Chairman make the appointment.

These, fellow-citizens, are my sentiments, politically, legally, morally, constitutionally. I endorse them, as already said, with my whole heart.

Standing on this platform, I desire to be a real, bona fide know-nothing; not caring to inquire whether a man, who is sound on this question, be whig or democrat, native citizen or naturalized. All I ask is, that he be loyal to the Constitution, and the constitutional rights of the South. If, then, the Union is to be saved, the South must not allow themselves to be divided, weakened and betrayed by domestic traitors, no matter to what extent she may have previously secured their confidence; but, on the contrary, must combine all their forces in one compact and serrated host, and present an unbroken front in defence of their constitutional rights, and in unyielding opposition to Northern aggressions.

I am fully satisfied, had the South been thus united for the last thirty years, the foul fiend of Abolitionism would long ere this have been crushed by the intelligence and patriotism of the free States. So long as we are divided among ourselves, and are war-

ring on each other rather than on the common enemy, we give aid and comfort to the anti-slavery feeling in the North; and thus help, though unintentionally, to crush those patriotic and noble spirits in that section, who have hitherto rallied to the defence of the Constitution, and the rights of the South. We owe these noble spirits a united and unfaltering support. We must have Northern votes in Congress, or a dissolution of the Union is inevitable. And I, for one, am bold to avow, that I am unalterably opposed to disunion, until it is proved beyond a reasonable doubt, that an anti-slavery majority in the North has *permanently resolved to trample under foot the constitutional rights of slaveholders*. We owe it, then, to ourselves as well as to our generous, noble and patriotic friends in the non-slaveholding States, to be united among ourselves; and to repudiate, as traitors and abolition emissaries, all who labor to divide, weaken and betray the South by keeping alive party spirit.

The abolitionists have madly sworn, and confirmed their unreasonable oaths by acts no less treasonable—by judicial and legislative acts, forcible resistance to the Constitution and laws of the Union, and repeated murder of officers employed in their execution—that the fugitive slave law shall be repealed or nullified; that slavery shall be abolished in the District of Columbia and in the Territories; that Kansas shall never come into the Union as a slave State; that no more slave States shall ever be added; that they will steal our slaves at pleasure, resisting the Constitution and laws for their delivery to service, and maltreating their owners and the public officers, who may go in their pursuit; and that they will never cease till they have abolished slavery in all the States, or dissolved the Union.

With the South, then, thus driven to the wall, the present struggle is obviously one of life or death. We can retreat no farther, and it would be infinitely *more horrible than death* TO SUCCUMB.

The fanatics have already driven us to the very brink of the precipice; and if they persist in the execution of their unholy and treasonable designs, and are not speedily crushed by the intelligence and patriotism of the free States, *where alone it can be done*, who so blind as not to see, that the Union will inevitably and speedily be dissolved! And who in the South so craven, so lost to manly impulse, so very a traitor, as to advise or desire, that the slave States should take no vigorous measures of even *necessary self-defence*, until they are completely wound up in the anaconda folds of this deadly serpent, and crushed, without the power of even a feeble resistance! The free States, if they choose, can elect an abolition President. The legislative balance of power in the Senate has been lost by the introduction of California as a free State, while it is obvious, that the salvation of the Union may depend on its restoration; and if the intelligence and

patriotism of the North are not brought to the rescue in this fearful crisis, what have the fifteen slave States, with more than six millions of free citizens, to depend on, but their own brave hearts, and strong arms?

Thank Heaven, they have *all the courage, more than twice the numbers, and at least twenty times the resources*, that our revolutionary sires had, when they defied the haughty tyrant George the Third, and, after a protracted struggle, drove his menial cohorts off the soil, that had been polluted by their unholy tread.

It is, therefore, vain to imagine, it is suicidal to hope, that such a people will submit to a worse tyranny in that government, which they themselves created for the "*common defence*," and which they could not have been induced to create at all, and CAN NOT NOW BE FORCED TO TOLERATE, FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE.

Let us then, fellow-citizens, be united, be vigilant. Let us husband our resources, concentrate our energies, and exhaust all peaceable means to protect our rights, and save the Union, if possible, from the Vandal assaults of abolition traitors and nullifiers. Let us hope for the best, and prepare for the worst; and then, *having done all that men can do to save the Union*, if a dissolution is forced upon us by domestic traitors, instigated thereto by the decrepid monarchies of the Old World, then I, for one, say, in the language of a distinguished Georgia statesman and patriot, "*having exhausted the argument, we will stand to our arms*;" our motto this, "God will defend the right!" and our consolation, that, *if Rome must fall*, we are innocent.

## Vita

Barry Cole Poyner was born 4 May 1962 in Mayfield, Kentucky, to Billy Cole Poyner and Elizabeth Ann (McCuan) Poyner. In May 1980 he graduated as valedictorian from Sedalia High School, Sedalia, Kentucky. During his senior year he served as state president of the Kentucky Mental Health--Mental Retardation Teens Who Care Association. In June 1984 he graduated summa cum laude from David Lipscomb College, Nashville, Tennessee, where he received the Bachelor of Arts degree in speech education and religious education. At Lipscomb he served as chapter president of the Student Tennessee Education Association. Having enrolled for graduate work at Louisiana State University, Poyner received the Master of Arts degree in speech communication in 1986. His thesis was entitled "The Secular Speaking of Evangelist George W. DeHoff."

On 24 August 1984 Poyner married the former Catherine Anne Lenoir of Huntsville, Alabama. Poyner has worked as an assistant minister with the 43rd St. West Church of Christ, Bradenton, Florida, Eastview Church of Christ, Nashville, Tennessee, and Goodwood Boulevard Church of Christ, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Since 1984 he has worked as a graduate assistant in speech communication at Louisiana State University, and since 1988 he has preached regularly for the Jackson Church of Christ, Jackson, Louisiana.

DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Barry Cole Poyner

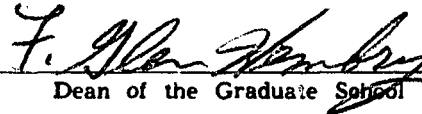
Major Field: Speech

Title of Dissertation: "Role Duality as Represented in the Anti-Abolitionist Speeches of James Shannon"

Approved:

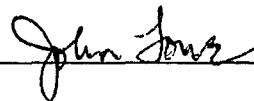


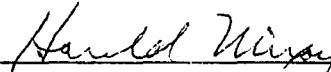
Major Professor and Chairman

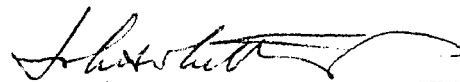


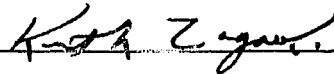
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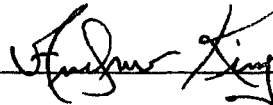
EXAMINING COMMITTEE:











Date of Examination:

April 23, 1990